MFTEQ 12

theglobalelectronicunderground

three pounds sterling

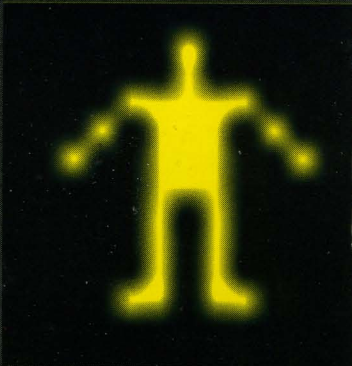
70 gwen party
alec empire anne clark
arthur loves plastic
autopsia derek bailey
die form electrip-c
francoise duvivier hi-
ryze opik s.e.t.i.
sheep on drugs

70 gwen party
alec empire anne clark
arthur loves plastic
autopsia derek bailey
die form electrip-c
francoise duvivier hi-
ryze opik s.e.t.i.

sheep on drugs

beatservice daft

beatservice daf
dorobo just crea
mille plateaux
re-constriction
screen edge swi
industrial-uk/u.s



the couch report
cyber bollocks
son of celluloid technofile
electronic techno ambient
industrial noise jap jazz

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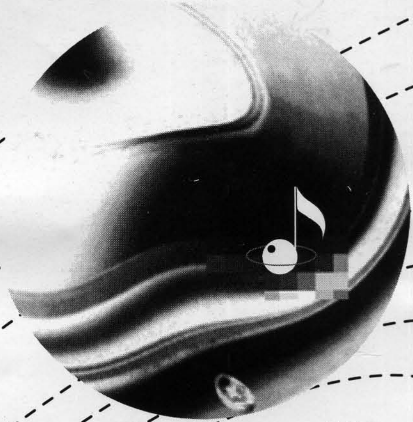

CD 3853 · 2

NONPLACE URBAN FIELD

nuf said

nonplaceurbanfield

CD 3854 · 2

DIGIDUB

+ (in)coming! september

dub cowboys

pie
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by
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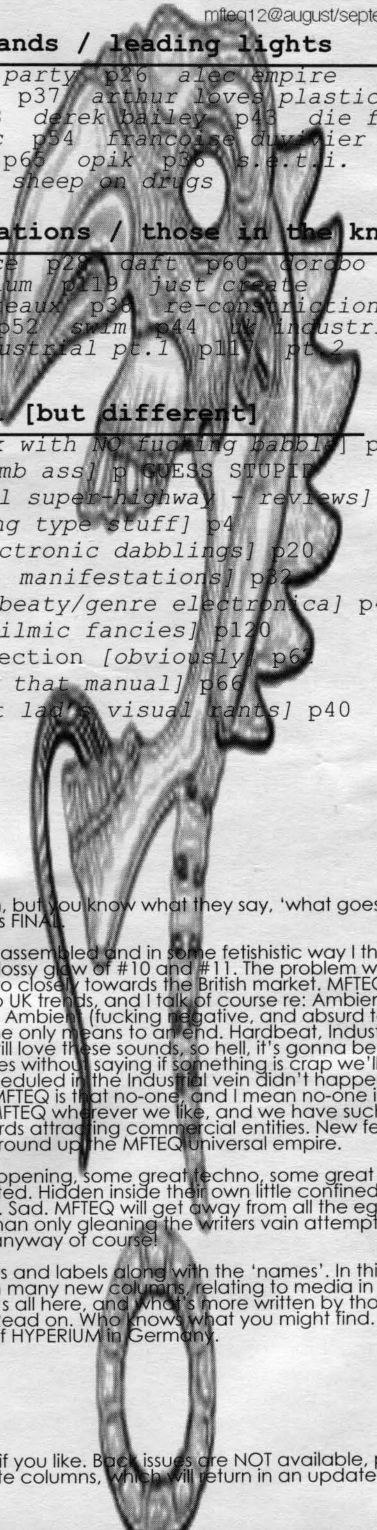


Execution No. 1 (#12)

Hey folks! Well, I never expected to be back here so soon, but you know what they say, 'what goes around, comes around' This time I'm here to stay... That is FINAL.

What can I tell you? As needs saw fit this issue was hastily assembled and in some fetishistic way I think it resembles more of what MFTEQ is really about than the glossy glow of #10 and #11. The problem with those issues, especially #11 was that they were looking too closely towards the British market. MFTEQ is GLOBAL. From hereon it won't be pandering full-frontal to UK trends, and I talk of course re: Ambient / Techno and yes those old chestnuts Isolationism or Death Ambient (fucking negative, and absurd terms). We'll continue to cover these areas, but they won't be the only means to an end. Hardbeat, Industrial, whatever.., has been neglected and I know half of you still love these sounds, so hell, it's gonna be written about in a more positive manner. Though of course, it goes without saying if something is crap we'll say so. (Sadly due to the lack of time, many of the interviews scheduled in the Industrial vein didn't happen, so will be trying to re-balance in Issue 13.). Another plus for MFTEQ is that no-one, and I mean no-one is pulling the strings. Nobody is funding us so we can take MFTEQ wherever we like, and we have such a strong base of sales already we don't have to work towards attracting commercial entities. New features and styles will always be recognised but that is merely to round up the MFTEQ universal empire.

What of the UK scene? Well, yeah, pretty good things happening, some great techno, some great EXPERIMENTAL, but as always totally ghettoised and isolated. Hidden inside their own little confined definitions, and touted in a high-brow sacrosanct fashion. Sad. MFTEQ will get away from all the egotistical bullshit. It's important that you read about artists, rather than only gleaning the writers vain attempt at achieving their own glory - glory, which is all their heads anyway of course!

It's time for us to get back to basics. Introduce new bands and labels along with the 'names'. In this issue you'll find underground names in abundance, along with many new columns, relating to media in general. Computer technology, recording technology, it's all here, and what's more written by those already involved in the industry, so they know their stuff. Read on. Who knows what you might find. And, of course, have a free listen to some great music courtesy of HYPERIUM in Germany.

Yours, a re-born and refreshed deadhead.

p.s. Consider ISSUE 12 the beginning of MFTEQ. Volume 2 if you like. Back issues are NOT available, please don't ask! Casualties this issue were the mag. and cassette columns, which will return in an updated form next issue, including a full book section.

eyeshot

PUPPY IS NO MORE... The long-awaited **SKINNY PUPPY** album for Nettwerk will be the last. **DOWNLOAD** is the new project, consisting of Key, Goettel, Marc Spybey, Thilth Western and P'Orridge. An album and single may already be out on the **OFF BEAT** label by the time you read this. **FRONT LINE ASSEMBLY** have also signed to the German label. Their first releases for the label are due in August/September, a single and album **"Hard Wired"** together with a CDRom. The sound is apparently 'a cross between "Caustic Grip" and The Prodigy' A tour of Europe is planned for October with a re-release of **"Disorder"**, **"Convergence"** and **"Corrosion"** on one full CD in November. Rhys Fulber meanwhile produced and programmed keyboards on the debut **ECONOLINE CRUSH** CD **"Affliction"** out on **EMI CANADA** - you may have caught them out on the road over July? Activity on Off Beat is intensified with releases by **DEMENTIA SIMPLEX**, **SUICIDE COMMANDO**, **ECO** and **DELAY** all by year end. Off Beat, Horster Str. 27, 45897 Gelsenkirchen, Germany.

From Slovenia, **ROPOT RECORDS**, closely linked to NSK, re-release the first official **LAIBACH** self-titled album commemorating the banning of the Laibach name from 1983-87 in Slovenia. On the same label is Laibach's **"Slovenska Akropola"** CD, a reissue of a vinyl LP from '87 issued in Slovenia and Yugoslav territories, and **PARACELSUS' "300.000 V.K."**. Contact can be made via the NSK Information Centre, where you can also obtain T-shirts, posters, and other merchandise, plus apply for an official NSK passport! NSK, PO Box 75, 61117 Ljubljana, Slovenia.

BINARY RECORDINGS, a new techno label being run by Illusion Of Safety main-man Dan Burke is looking for demos for 12" and CD releases. Interested in all styles, particularly Acid, Ambient and Trance. Also seeking tracks for an experimental techno compilation. Binary Recordings, PO Box 59604, Schaumburg, IL 60159-0604, USA. Fax: 708 885 9682.

RoJaRo INDEX & DATABASE is now available via the Internet. For many years they have scoured through hundreds or magazines and indexed their contents. Now available across the world, access to the information they've gathered can be obtained simply. This is one of the best reference tools there is. Contactable by mail c/o K.M. Aase, POB 6724 Rodeloekka, N-0503 Oslo, Norway. Can be found using: http://www.notam.uio.no/rojaro/

Dirk Ivens of DIVE has released the first 4 CD's through Discordia on his relaunched **DAFT** label. **HYBRYDS' "Soundtrack for the Aquarium"**, **MUSLIMGAUZE' "Silknoose"**, **ESPLENDOR GEOMETRICO**'s **"Nador"** and **"Music For An S&M Scene"** from **MASTER/SLAVE RELATIONSHIP**. These will be followed by **"Holy War"** from **BLACKHOUSE** and the new **DIVE** title, **"Grinding Walls"** By the way Discordia have released a special, limited boxed DIVE 2CD-set, comprising **"First"**, **"Images"**, **"Final Report"** and **"Live Action"**, though in an edition of 1000 I doubt if there'll be any left by the time you read this! DAFT Records, Stationsstraat 116, 9120 Beveren, Belgium.

MINUS HABENS RECORDS follow their latest Klange and Red Sector A releases with yet more **KLANGE "Green Mars"** CD and an informative Book/CD package **"Internet Underground Guide"** On the techno offshoot **DISTURBANCE** label sees the self-titled debut from **URBANATRIBU** and the third in their **"Outer Space Communications"** compilation series. This is also the cite of **"Neural"** magazine and where you can purchase VR Brain Machines for complete enhancement. Minus Habens Records/Disturbance, Via Guistino 8/N, 70125 Bari, Italy.

After a period of inactivity its good to see **PDCD** back in action. **BLACK STATE CHOIR**'s **"Permaculture"** has finally seen full release, so too **SKULLFLOWER**'s **"Infinityland"**. Newest title is **BSC**'s second, **"Pachakuti"** CD. Expect more prime noise/deviance in the near future. PDCD, Kernerstr. 15, 71543 Wuestenrot, Germany.

ARTWARE PRODUCTS in Germany have issued a limited edition book featuring the photography of **DIE FORM**'s Philippe Fichot. Entitled **"The Visionary Garden - Photographies 80-95"**, and in an edition of only 1000 copies is sure to sell very quickly Text is is English, German, Japanese and Italian so is sure to cover all. Artware Edition, Donna Klemm, Taunusstr. 63b, 65183 Wiesbaden, Germany.

For any space cadets into **TIMESHARD** you should be aware that the band puts together a newsletter, **"The Shardian"**! News, tour dates, shirts and exclusive cassette offers. A live set should be available from them soon-ish, but meanwhile the band, apart from many festival appearances, will be writing and recording a new album for later in the year. Timeshard, PO Box 26, Liverpool L17 3DZ, UK.

WHITEHOUSE have announced a new album will be recorded in September, again with Steve Albini at the controls. Set for release on their own Susan Lawly, **"Quality Time"** will feature six new tracks. As recording will take place in Albini's Chicago studios, the band plan two live dates over there. The Japanese fan club will also shortly be releasing a live CD. Check out more details from the Whitehouse Newsletter, Susan Lawly, PO Box 914, Edinburgh EH17 8BF, UK.

IN THE NURSERY having re-released most of their back catalogue on their own ITN Corporation label, now issue a 16-track retrospective, **"Scatter"** filled with rarities, remixes and new material. The band are currently working on a new album, due for release in the New Year. A side-project, **LES JUMEAUX** is also recording an album, though no more details are known at present. ITN Corporation, 52 Roebuck Road, Sheffield S6 3GQ, UK.

The **BODY AND BLOOD EXPLORATION** who issued the lovely Sigillum S some time ago have released a compilation of sound/noisescapes. The CD features a wealth of names; BRIGHTER DEATH NOW, DEUTSCH NEPAL, IUGULA-THOR, CON-DOM and SIGILLUM S amongst the masses. The title is being marketed by **FRINGE PRODUCT** home to DHI, is also distributing new **DOVentertainment** titles: **DEAD VOICES ON AIR "New Words Machine"** CD, which is Mark Spybey, ex-of Zoviet France with collaboration on a few tracks from cEvin Key. The other DOVe title is a compilation with input from FLA, PUPPY, ZOVIET and DIN, entitled **"Ambient Rituals"**. Fringe Product, Box 670, Station A, Toronto, M5W 1G2, Canada.

DIRECTION MUSIC is definitely operative again. Amongst the many cassettes still available; **MAEROR TRI, CONTRASTATE, ANDREW PINCHES, ROBERT ANDREWS**; a video, **"From the Hills of Dream"** is available featuring some of the above plus COLIN POTTER, PLANT BACH OFNUS and KEVIN O'NEILL. This immensely conceptual label are also marketing **GRAHAM BOWERS**' darkly expressionist **"Of Mary's Blood"** CD, out on the **RED WHARF** label, whose work encompasses painting, sculpture and many other art forms. Direction Music, 28 Nant-y-Felin, Pentraeth, Anglesey, Gwynedd, LL75 8UY.

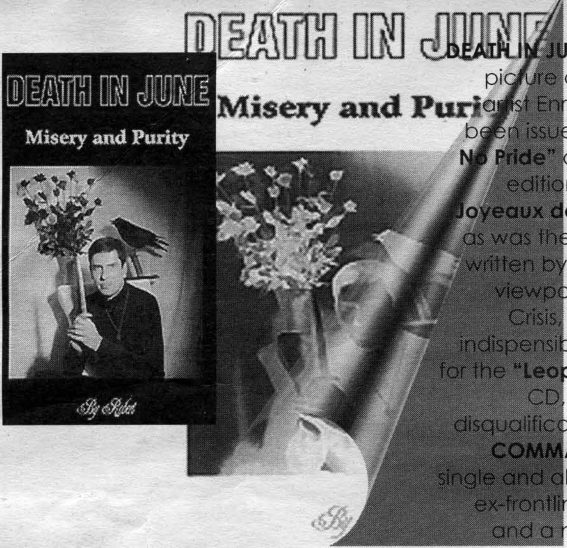
If a catalogue filled with nothing but 7" vinyl singles bring goosebumps to your back then **LA DEVIATION TOTALE** will definitely be worth sending an IRC to. Contents range from experimental to noise, and you'll never find a CD in there! La Deviation Totale, c/o Sylvie Filet, 8 Rue Yves Kermen, 92100 Boulogne Billancourt, France.

Another unusual catalogue stems from **LITTLE GREEN MAN MUSIC**, whose pages contain demo tapes only - they review and sell them, lots of them! Worth dipping your toes in. Little Green Man Music, 5 Ashwell Road, Baguley, M23 1AL, UK.

AMPLEXUS is a new Italian label issuing 3" mini-CD's much in the same way as the established Metamkine label. Amplexus issue their CD's in colour fold-out wallets with titles initially from **ROBERT RICH, VIDNA OBMANA, DJEN AJAKAN SHEAN** and **STEVE ROACH**. All in editions of only 1000 copies. Amplexus, c/o Stefano Gentile, Via Franceschi 1, 31029 Vittorio V. TO (TV), Italy.

At **METAMKINE** another few CD's have been issued in their series. **PATRICK DE FILIPPIS, PATRICK ASCIONE, MICHEL CHION, JEAN-MARC DUCHENNE** and **PHILIPPE MION** all have titles, adding to 17 in the series. Metamkine, 13 Rue de la Drague, 38600 Fontaine, France.

The Swedish home of all that's bound in darkness, **COLD MEAT INDUSTRY** have released the first new Maschinenzimmer 412 material in six years. Now down as just **MZ.412** their **"In Nomine Dei Nostri Satanas Luciferi Excelsi"** CD is sure to hit as hard, if a little further inside as "Macht Durch Stimme", which is now available once again on Dark Vinyl. Following the massively popular "Great Death" box, **BRIGHTER DEATH NOW**'s new one **"Necrose Evangelicum"** is apparently 'beyond evil'! The suicidals are also ensconsed in their coffins creating the third part of "Great Death" for those who've sent in their money upfront. Expect new material on the side-label **DEATH FACTORY** too. The label has put together a second newsletter which gives a more complete picture along with an interviews on many of their artists. Cold Meat Industry, PO Box 1881, S-581 17 Linkoping, Sweden.



DEATH IN JUNE's **NER** label have announced a series of picture discs of past albums. All designed by Italian artist Enrico Chiarparin the first, **"Nada"** has already been issued. **"The Wall of Sacrifice"**, **"The Guilty Have No Pride"** and **"Brown Book"** are to follow, each in an edition of only 2000. The band's new album, **"Les Joyeaux de la Princesse"** has recently been released, as was the official **"Misery And Purity"** softback book, written by Robert. This book is written from a personal viewpoint, covering ground from the beginning of Crisis, up to present day. At over 200 pages this is indispensible. Collectors will have get their wallets out for the **"Leopard Flow"** single. Issued on 7", 10", 12" and CD, all formats will have different mixes - a sure disqualification from the Top 30! The offshoot **TWILIGHT COMMAND** label follow **STRENGTH THROUGH JOY**'s single and album with releases from **TEHOM**, which is an ex-frontline soldier from the Croatian Special Forces, and a new project from ex-SPK man John Murphy, called **SCORPION WIND**, but before then **OCCIDENTAL MARTYR** are already at the front line with a 10"/CD mini-album. NER, BM June, London WC1N 3XX, UK.

FIFTH COLUMN in the States have announced a licensing deal with Hard Records, meaning titles by **LUC VAN ACKER** and **MAX M** will finally get a fair airing in the States. The label have signed a similar deal with the UK's Cybertec label. A considerable release schedule from August - October includes material from **BLACK LUNG, IPECAC LOOP, HEBERT HUNKE, DESSAU, P.O.D., ELECTRO ASSASSIN, NEW MIND, CRISIS FRACTURE**, an F242 side-project **CYBER-TEC PROJ.** and two compilations; an FCR sampler including a new CHEMLAB song, and **"With Sympathy"**, being made up of material from bands influenced by the finest electro-pop album of all time (by Ministry, as if you didn't know already). Fifth Column, POB 787, Ben Franklin Station, Washington, DC 20044, USA.

DOROBO have an extensive schedule of releases: **SHINJUKU THIEF**'s **"The Witch Hunter"** is followed early in the New Year by **"Soft Ash"**, **ALAN LAMB** has a second disk of archival footage before year end, and from September two sets from the **MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT of ZOOLOGY**; the first **"Aquatic Insect Research"** and the second, **"Hybrid Zone Frog Calls"**. A compilation of Japanese Dark Ambient should also be available by the time you read this. UK distribution has now been secured through Impetus for all titles. The techno off-shoot **IRIDIUM** has a similarly weighty schedule, and includes, an EP, plus limited remixes from BLACK LUNG, **FRANCOIS TETAZ** solo project, a **TCH** album, **PROFESSOR RICHMANN** ambient album and a collection of Japanese techno. Dorobo/Iridium, PO Box 22, Glen Waverley, Victoria 3150, Australia.

WMO (or Wire Mail Order) are putting together a Wire Tribute CD, to be released by Mute Records early next year. The line-up is being kept a secret at this time but it will be an amazingly diverse compilation, with names from both the underground and extremely well-known names, such was the force of Wire influence. WMO itself will release **DESMOND SIMMONS**' **"Alone On Penguin Island"**, a **LEWIS/GILBERT and MILLS** and a Wire compilation (following **EMI**'s **"Behind The Curtain"** title). More Gilbert, Dome, and Newman is planned. WMO, PO Box 54, Hitchin, Herts SG4 7TQ, UK or PO Box 322, Alta Loma, CA 91701-0322, USA.

MNW ZONE have issued Graham Lewis' **H.A.L.O.** project, with an album **"Immanent"**, single **"Eclipsed"** including LFO mixes, and another single **"The Fear Grows"**. Along with their **MNW DANCE** label, their release schedule includes work from **SPACEWOMEN, PLASTICO, LOOK TWICE, SLEEPING APE** and **MISERY LOVES CO.** MNW, Box 17543, S-200 10 Malmo, Sweden.

The American **DECIBEL** label, whose debut **ALIEN FAKTOR** is reviewed elsewhere, follow with titles from **ONEIROID PSYCHOSIS** and **MORPHEUS SISTER**. Clearly a label to keep up with. Decibel, 17125c W. Bluemound Road #122, Milwaukee, WI 53009-0949, USA.

VISIONARY continue with a full schedule of titles as diverse as **DIVINE** and **JOHNNY CASH, NIK TURNER** and the visual version of Cleopatra's **"Industrial Revolution"**, but in September they announce the launch of **SCREEN EDGE**. A new UK video label concentrating on good quality films made in the independant sector. Full details can be found in the feature in this issue and one of the label's main workforce, Richard King can also be seen regularly in these pages with his regular TV/Film media column. Visionary/Screen Edge, 28/30 The Square, St. Annes On Sea, FY8 1RF, UK.

FIRST CIRCLE who've been involved in the UK's experimental scene for many years have announced their first CD release. By French musique concret specialists **BRUME**, the 60 minute **"Normal"** is presented in special packaging courtesy of in-house Action Concret art. First Circle, c/o Flat 5, Vernon Court, Vernon Terrace, Northampton, NN1 5HE, UK.

The Belgian **SUB ROSA** label, undoubtedly one of the most orginal in the world have issued a special low-price promotional CD, **"A Man of Sorrows"**. Eighteen tracks of extreme diversity. Impossible that this 84th release would cover their full range of output, but it tries hard! Sub Rosa, PO Box 808, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.

FREEDOM IN A VACUUM seem to have stepped up activity of late. First releases on CD are in the form of **CRAWL/CHILD, VIOLENCE & THE SACRED, BELT** and two compilations; **"To Step Outside..."** with GREIF, JOCELYN ROBERT and CONTACT WITH A CURVE, and **"Unbecoming"**, including PGR, JOHN DUNCAN, ALLEGORY CHAPEL... Earlier this year the label joined forces again with The Music Gallery and presented a series of concerts and exhibitions, featuring the likes of Dive, Sucking Chest Wound, Premature Ejaculation and Phycus. Freedom In A Vacuum, PO Box 862, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2N7, Canada.

CRI DU CHAT the successful Brazilian label have announced the closure of its European office. Their latest releases CD's are from **VANISHING POINT**, **SILVERBLOOD** and **HARRY**. All enquiries should now be made directly to: Cri Du Chat Disques, Cx. Postal 42396, CEP 04299-970, Sao Paolo, Brazil.

Jordi Valls' **VAGINA DENTATA ORGAN** have been quiet for some years. Through their WSNS label **"Un Chien Catalan"** CD is released in an edition of only 1000. All their back catalogue is deleted, but if you're quick you may catch the new title. WSNS, PO Box 116, London N19 5DZ, UK.

N D, the U.S. label and magazine are now representing the long-established German **SELEKTION** label making CD's from **P16.D4, RALF WEHOWSKY, MERZBOW and WOLLSCHEID** readily avaialble across the Atlantic. This year N D has released material by **BRUME, MAEROR TRI, VIDNA OBMANA, THE FACTORY PRESS** and **SHIFT**, and of course, their excellent magazine is still being published twice yearly. N D, PO Box 4144, Austin, TX 78765, USA.

FIFTH CIRCUIT, the Bradford club who've put on the likes of Zoviet France, Whitehouse, Mother Destruction and Scorn, are now issuing a newsletter devoted to the experimental/noise scenes. Items for inclusion should be forwarded to Jamie, 68 Grantham Road, Bradford, BD7 1RN, UK.

RECREC celebrated their 10th Anniversary with a compilation CD, **"Step to Another World Music"**, featuring 27 bands from across the globe. A set of innovation from the likes of NEGATIVLAND, THE EX, OSTERTAG, FRITH and too many others to mention. The CD is complete with a 24-page booklet offering information about each artist. It's good to see one of the most interesting labels and distributor surviving in these harsh times. RECREC, Postfach 501803, D-22718 Hamburg, Germany (and other offices around Europe).

THE INVISIBLE COLLEGE have set up an all-nite 'speedcore techno club' in Brixton, London, called **DEAD BY DAWN**. Monthly meetings are held with talks on chaos theory, occulture, etc... More info from The Invisible College, BM Jed, London WC1N 3XX, UK.

"CON-SEQUENCE" is a biographical book about **CONRAD SCHNITZLER**'s 25 years in music and multi-media. A 150 page softback, written by the editors' of the Tangerine Dream newsletter, Rolf Sonnemann and Peter Stoferle. Further information from Rolf Sonnemann, Kaspar-Bitter-Strasse 6, 38685 Langelsheim, Germany.

The **LONDON MUSICIAN'S COLLECTIVE** are now taking subscribers, whose membership will include monthly mail-outs and the twice-monthly **"Resonance"** magazine. LMC Ltd, 60 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3BP, UK.

DISCUS follow-up their well received **"Network Volume One - 55 Music Miniatures"** by working on **"Volume 2"**, naturally enough. Also down the line are releases from mainman **MARTIN ARCHER, TRANSIENT v RESIDENT** and a CD of electro-acoustic works from **ARCHER, FELL, GODMAN, NORMAN** and **VINCENT**. Their back catalogue should be checked too. Discus, PO Box 658, Sheffield S10 3YR, UK.

AURAL EXCITER continue to release high quality (both sound and artwork) cassettes. **JAYWALKER, RELIGIOUS OVERDOSE** (not the pre-Venus Fly Trap band) and **DESTROY AFTER USE** all have tape out. Aural Exciter, c/o albdruck AG, Herzogstrasse 26, CH 5000 Aarau, Switzerland.

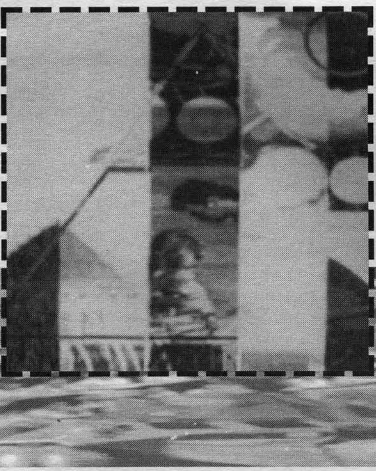
DECAY RECORDS of Denmark have two fine releases out. **INSTITUTE FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE**'s **"Gekippt"** and the industrial techno of **A.U.M.**'s **"Morph"**. Decay Records, PO Box 179, DK-1005 CPH, Denmark.

VON MAGNET, inventors of 'Electroflamenco' (!!!) music, have signed to Hyperium. The first release isn't actually by them but a compilation of their past tracks re-done by artists including, BOURBONESE QUALK, GUS FERGUSON, UWE SCHMITT (Atom Heart), CALVA Y NADA and VICTOR SOL. Credited as VON MAGNET MEETS THE DATA GYPSIES, the CD is entitled **"Cosmogonia"**. The band can be contacted via Phil VON, 71 Rue du Chateau, 77720 La Chapelle Gauthier, France.

SCATTER is a new label from Glasgow. Initial releases are **DEREK BAILEY**'s **"Drop Me Off At 96th"** and **DISLOCATION**'s **"Carve Another Notch"**, both on CD. Scatter, (1/2) 79 West End Park Street, Glasgow G3 6LJ, UK.

PROJEKT the home of Black Tape For A Blue Girl has fast become one of the most professional and distinguished labels. Managing to release a range of atmospheric and haunting alternative music, new titles from **LYCIA** and their side-project **BLEAK, EDEN, HUMAN DRAMA**, plus full licensing of the entire **ORDO EQUITUM SOLIS** catalogue for America. Projekt's reissue label RELIC has released another batch of **ATTRITION** titles with the 1987, **"Death House"** on the horizon. If in any doubt as to Projekt's concern for good music try their budget **"Beneath The Icy Floe"** sampler. Projekt, Box 1591, Garden Grove, CA 92642-1591, USA.

DRAGNET RECORDS have announced some changes as well as expansion. A parent company **SCOUT PRODUCTIONS** has been set up, and within it are the following: **SCOUT RELEASES** being their main label identity, whose initial releases are by **ASHTRAY BOY, HANDSOME FAMILY, DELTA OF VENUS, COLOURBLIND JAMES EXPERIENCE**, and a CD reissue of **THE FALL**'s **"Legendary Chaos Tape"**; **ELVES RECORDING**, whose releases include **SIDDAL, CHAKO** and **JAG**; **DRAG & DROP** is the new name for Dragnet Records' type-material (i.e. leaning towards experimental) with **ESPLENDOR GEOMETRICO**'s **"Kosmos Kino"**, new **I.A.M. UMBRELLA**, a debut from the Prunes' **DAVE-ID BUSARAS**, plus **VIVENZA** and **MERCANTAN**; **TARGET EXPORT** is obviously as it sounds and **DRAGNET** remains as the collector's shop from where it all started. Needless to say with all this activity they're looking for demos and new artists/titles to work with. Scout Productions, Susterfeldstr. 61, 52072 Aachen, Germany.



STAALPLAAT will release the new **LEGENDARY PINK DOTS** album **"From Here We'll Watch The World Go By"** in September. Already out should be the new **IN SLAUGHTER NATIVES "Purgate My Stain"** CD, which looks like could be their last. Staalplaat, PO Box 11453, 1001 GL Amsterdam, The Netherlands

London's **DISOBEY** club continues to pull regular crowds, DJ Beekeeper (aka Bruce Gilbert) is resident, while noises from as far and wide as Aphex and Merzbow play. Funded by Mute Records and held Upstairs at The Garage, 20-22 Highbury Corner, London N5 1RD, UK.

Denmark's **HARD RECORDS** release the second and third instalments of **LUC VAN ACKER**'s **"Taking Snapshots"** series, as well as releases from **T.H.D., DIGITAL FACTOR, BASSLINE RESEARCH** and **SPHERE LAZZA**. Hard Records, C.F. Richsvej 122,2.th, 2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark.

CASSANDRA COMPLEX are due to tread these shore once again for a couple of dates in November. Rodney Orpheus has actually been recording here and will release the new album on his own Original Artists label. He's involved in a new project with Patricia Nigiani from Project Pitchfork and Marcus Giltjes of Pink Turns Blue. Called **SUN GOD** they have a self-titled CD out, available through Primary in the UK. Primary, PO Box 3213, London SW2 3QQ, UK.

TIMEBASE have announced two new releases. The first is new work from **TEMPS PERDU?** called **"Terra Incognita"** and the other is a compilation **"Twilight Earth, Second International Soiree"** featuring MATHIAS GRASSOW, STEPHEN KENT, ROBERT RICH, DJEN AJAKAN SHEAN and more. Timebase, PO Box 260430, 40097 Dusseldorf, Germany.

EYELESS IN GAZA seem to have a new lease of life with a tremendous amount of activity over the next few months. As well as touring Europe a new album called **"Year Dot"** will appear on their own **A-SCALE** label, plus collaborative material on the new **ANNE CLARK "To Love And Be Loved"** on **SPV**. Martyn Bates' pre-Eyeless free-form collage project **MIGRAINE INDUCERS** is being shopped around for the world to see and the man has contributed vocals to **SIMON FISHER TURNER**'s latest work. All this plus a track (with Anne Clark) on Laswell's spoken word project. This CD will also feature the likes of IGGY POP, GALAS, BURROUGHS and more... A-Scale, PO Box 3, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 9YT, UK.

eM13n is a German label devoted to musical collages. Electro-acoustic work from **NACHTLUFT** and **ILLUSION OF SAFETY**'s concrete **"Rules Of The Game"** were preceeded by **HEEMANN & JACK OR JIVE**'s **"Seclusion-Yukigafuru"** mini-CD. More to come. eM 13n, Inzlingerstr. 22, D-79540 Lorrach, Germany.

Wacko Copo - no scrub that, doesn't quite have the same ring... **JULIAN COPE**'s book on Krautrock will be out soon. If you saw the features in The Wire you'll know where he's coming from. Catch the limited, signed edition with T-shirt, 2 CD's, all in special packaging if you can. The 'Archdrude' (that's what it says here) has a new album, **"20 Mothers"** plus single out soon. More details on himself and more earthly matters from: KAK Ltd, PO Box 3823, London N8 8TQ, UK.

MARK SOLOTROFF, formerly of Instrinsic Action has a cassette available on **BLOODLUST!** of solo material entitled **"Instrumental Demonstration of Death-Noise"**. The same label also re-releases **IUGULA THOR**'s **"We Are Ready"** 7" in an edition of only 100! Bloodlust!, PO Box 7962, JAF Station, New York, NY 10116, USA.

SILVERFISH the techno club, come gallery, come record shop is now full-on, once again. Members can experience live acts, or simply sip a cappuccino. Your own DAT's, videos are more than welcome, and sending may prove a wise move as they're starting their own label. Silverfish, 146 Charing Cross Road, London WC2, UK.

"Nett:Werk Ein:s" is a compilation CD being released by **IRRE-TAPES** featuring DEBUT, SACK, BAR + CO and SUBSTANZ T. Packaging fetishists should note this CD is sold between two 7" 'vinyl things'! Irre-Tapes, Barendellstr. 35, 66862 Kindsbach, Germany.

FLUX is in the process of putting together an e-zine on the Net. With a general theme of the 20th Century Avant-Garde, the music section will feature industrial, goth and techno. For more info. contact Flux, BM Box 4392, London WC1N 3XX, UK.

all items for inclusion in eyeshot should be mailed to the TEQ address or faxed to: +44 (0)181 518 3092 - attn. deadhead

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HYPERIUM

'Music Of Quality And Distinction'

deadhead

Hyperium is a label impossible to ignore! Since MFTEQ's inception quality CD's have flowed our way from Europe, none more so than the floods of Hyperium releases.

One of this German label's great 'plus-points' is that they don't stick to just one musical style. Try grabbing ahold of their "From Hypnotic..." "...To Hypersonic" set of compilations and you'll see what I mean. Ethereal ambience to cyber beats, serious experimentation through sweet pop music, all can be heard via Hyperium. The free CD with this issue only touches on their diversity, believe me.

Oliver Rosch is the man who's made it all happen. Five years ago there were a handful of releases coming through from Germany, these days hardly a week goes by without one or two titles being launched around the globe. A massive organisational task. Importantly he is a LOVER of music. His hobby has turned into a full-time (and more) job, but the sounds he releases are still as important to him now.

Rather than me waffle on I'll let the man, who most definately CAN, set about revealing the philosophy and inside-workings of the Hyperium empire - and at 180 releases it's a bloody big empire. Over to you captain Rosch...

I started HYPNOBEAT about 8 years ago releasing industrial - experimental stuff. We had the labels HYPNOBEAT and FLABBERGAST - both distributed in Germany via Semaphore. The first big hit for our label was the Goth-Rock band LOVE LIKE BLOOD which sold nearly 15,000 copies of their first album through us. Until that point Hypnobeat has been a kind of a hobby for me, but then it has became financially too big for doing the label as hobby.

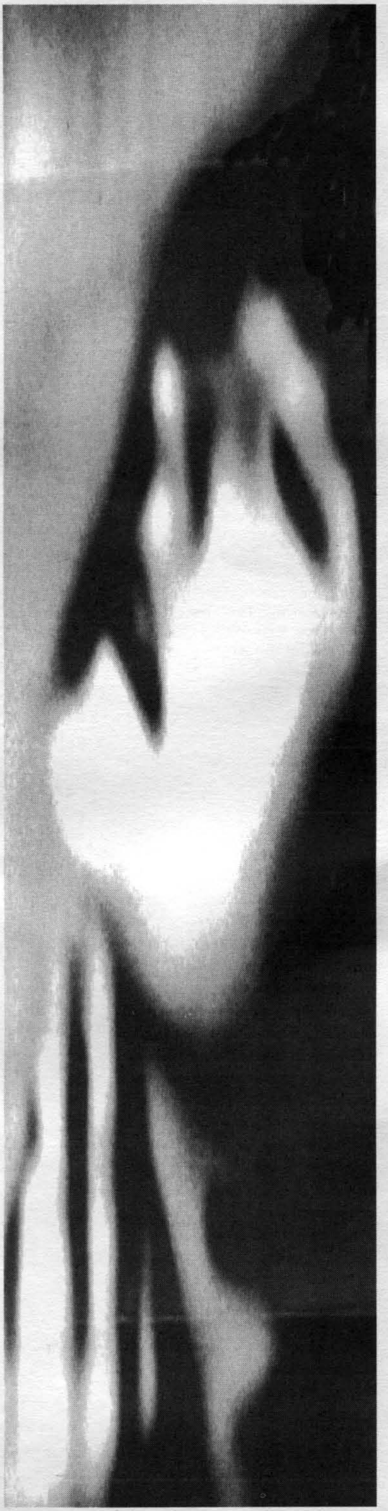
The philosophy is to release intense music which brings variety! We do not see us as an dark-ambient-label, or so - we release music for everybody. The musical variety at Hyperium ranges from ETHEREAL - POP WAVE - INDUSTRIAL - ELECTRO - AMBIENT TECHNO - LISTENING TECHNO... and we want to discover new fields everytime. We do want to have continuity in the releases and we take care for the cover-artwork a lot to present a whole package to the customer! Releasing music we like is the main philosophy of our work to bring relaxing mind-going music to the people outside - no matter whether they are interested in pop or new age or underground - our music can hit EVERYBODY!

About four years ago Marc Ross joined the label and helped setting and building up the firm and the face of the firm outside - He just founded (about six months ago) the label HYPNOTISM which brings intellectual techno-ambient sessions in one context. Artists like Atom Heart, Victor Sol, Alex Martin, Andrew Lagowski have, and will release material on this label.

About four years ago HYPERIUM was founded through a new distribution deal at ROUGH TRADE In Germany. The label HYPERIUM stands for ETHEREAL POP and IMPRESSING ELECTRONIC SOUNDS.

We have released about 180 CD's and there came massive releases at one time. This has several reasons - but nothing to do with money-influx. Through the fact that we do sell about 1,000-2,000 copies of each release and that we do invest a lot of money into promotion / posters / design, etc. we don't earn a lot per CD... But the firm has grown and more people came in, so we needed more income and we released more CD's selling each 1,000 copies... We are currently 6 persons working and we do need money to keep the work up. Through the fact that our bands are not toooo commercial and not toooo big - we needed more CD's, instead of selling one 20,000 times (which would have been amazing...). For example our big bands are LOVE IS COLDER THAN DEATH / STOA / CALVA Y NADA which sold about 4,000-8,000 copies per CD and all the other titles are between 1,000 and 2,000 copies.

The biggest act on the label has been PROJECT PITCHFORK which left to SPV - we released five cd's of the band and that made as bigger, but not earning a lot of money, because the



band's licenses have been high and the promotional costs immense.

Another reason for releasing a lot of CD's has also been that I love releasing good music and there has been the opportunity to do so - so we did it! Nowadays we are going back to release less material, because the image of the label has been transported world-wide and we want now (after constructing the basis) to promote the bands up to more and higher sales!

YES it's extremely important for me to release a variety of sounds. My favourite CD's are albums which swap from one musical style to another! Starting the label eight years ago I released all the different music styles under one label, but from the marketing-view for the label this has been a flop, because nobody was able to identify with the label. We started planning different labels for different music styles and now we have been able to market them better, because the techno-market is completely different to the ethereal-Goth oriented market! The design of the CD's was made extra for the label - that means the Hyperium-design is ethereal oriented/the Hypnotism-design ambient-intellectual oriented/the Hyponobeat-design electro-oriented.

We do work with artists on a big TRUST basis. When we receive demo-material and when we think... "Yeah that's great" then we do trust the artist completely in their music. They go to the studio completely alone - no producer from Hyperium - only when they do ask for a producer. They are musically free. We also do not search for music for commercial results. We do release music which belongs to us and our feeling is of course we do feel that our music - especially the HEAVENLY VOICES progamme - can fit for a lot of people and not only the "Scene" but it's too hard to go into this big market, because our promotional-budgets are small and therefore we cannot place ads. in big music magazines.

The criteria for the artist... We normally want to meet the artist (if possible) before we do the contract to see whether he likes us and the other way round. This point is important - we could not work with people who were not on our wavelength. There are always problems between labels and artists (simply because of the different view for the market etc.) and these problems can only be handled when you know about the artist and when you do have a personal touch in your relationship. This is a very important point. I don't think that we can work 100% when an artists sucks - and the other way round - when the artist thinks the label sucks, then the co-operation should be finished at once.

Regarding the big quantities. Of course - it would be fine to sell 20,000 and more copies of our products, but as long as we can run the label we don't search for material to come to this mark. We would of course be happy if our bands would reach this but I wouldn't say NO to a band or CD when it's clear from the beginning that 1,000 CD's, and not more, can be sold and when the music is fantastic for us - WE would do it! The promotional side would not be very high, but we try to sell as many as possible.

Regarding the problems will promotion and the large amount of artists. Yes of course it causes problems, because lots of your 'favourite' themes are the ones selling little amounts... So you have to split the PROMOTIONAL SECTION, the 'big' and the 'small' titles. That means more concentration on the well-known acts and normal attention to the new and unknown acts of course. The problems to make everything effective is big of course. Too many CD's to promote in a 100% way, but the main releases are offered in a big way to the magazines and for these releases 100% work is guaranteed, but as said only for the main-priorily-releases.

Normally 'small' and 'unknown' acts do first grow by themselves. That means sending out only 100 copies to press and DJ's instead of our normal surrounding of 300 copies. The music grows in the scene by itself - through word of mouth. After a short period we can see on the market and through talking with the people 'outside' in clubs / bars / at magazines whether they have heard about the act and then we see whether this act is READY for a big promotion with the next product or not.

The promotional work is split into main priorities and normal priorities as well as normal releases. Therefore we can guarantee the 'well-known' acts a 100% job and the others the best possible work, of course. The organisation of the promotional side is good and is made through the computer a lot of things easier and possible to act faster. Through the perfect work of Mark Ross who promoted our stuff until July 1995, and his excellent contacts at magazines and filing of the contacts has made a lot of things easier, because of the personal touch he made with the reviewers, magazines, etc.

Our products do sell normally between 1,000 and 2,000 copies per release. The big titles between 4,000 - 8,000 copies. HYPNOBEAT/HYPERIUM is distributed worldwide in 30 countries. In the U.S. we do have our own office run by SAM ROSENTHAL of PROJEKT RECORDS who made everything to bring the label up in the U.S. He did a fantastic job and fowarded the knowledge of the label a lot. We do sell a lot of a normal CD album in the U.S., currently between 300-1,000 copies through Sam!

The best markel besides Germany is Asia. Our female voice stuff sells good there! Also France has been growing wih the help of SEMANTIC distribution! Another big market is MEXICO for us - we do have some license-deals over there for our ethereal stuff and STOA already hit the NEW AGE charts there!

The cooperation with PROJEKT - DARKWAVE is the best thing which could happen to a label. We are personal friends and have realised each other, because our musical styles are quite near. It was EASY to come to an agreement to work for both - that means PROJEKT runs HYPERIUM in the U.S. and HYPERIUM runs PROJEKT in Europe. Everybody is investing his own money into the promotion and forwarding of the 'other label' material to get more involved and to feel more intense for the 'other label' This situation works very well. Everybody is doing his best to forward and to promote the releases. In the past two years of teamwork everybody is and was happy about the other firm's results and through the fact that we trade CD for CD, we and he are able to offer the CD's in the market at DOMESTIC PRICES - which is a big plus point for the relationship. The customer can buy a HYPERIUM import CD for domestic prices in the U.S. and the other way round!

We try to meet each other once a year to discuss the strategies and how everybody sees his releases and where everybody wants to go - then we can work with the 'philosophy' of the other label in the head!

The free CD included presents mainly the HYPERIUM and HYPNOBEAT acts. Through the fact that we are deeply in the Ambient-dance-section with our labels WIGWAM / HYPNOTISM / TOX / HEAVENLY GROOVE I can say that the CD is representative for the HYPERIUM-HYPNOBEAT labels, but not for the whole complex of our firm. We could compile another compilation with different music also from our labels - the more listening techno - ambient - darkambient stuff...

Our future plans are to move forward. To release less product and to concentrate on the main acts on the label. We want to discover new fields of selling product. For example STOA - a neoclassical dark band got reputation in Mexico from the NEW AGE/JAZZ scene - so we think - let's try the same in Germany. We do have the problem that a lot of people do say Hyperium-Hypnobeat is a 'dark-goth' label, but that's not true! Our music has its roots in the underground - OK in the dark underground - but our musicians and the people that run the label are not 'dark' or something like that. We all want to listen to quality music with a serious touch, either dark or ambient orientated, but nothing like Goth! STOA sold more than 2,000 copies in Mexico and sold more than Mike Oldfield in the Mexican charts to 'normal' listeners who are interested in new sounds and quality music.

Further plans are to search for other territories to sell and to license products. We are always open to license CD's to other labels/partners worldwide, etc.

My own favourites for personal listening is listening techno and ambient. The perfect piece of music is the combination of Ethereal female voices (like Love Is Colder / Stoa / Chandeen) combined with groove-music based on trance, ambient and strange grooves. This goal is made for HEAVENLY GROOVES - we are searching for tracks like 'PAPUA NEW GUINEA' from FSOL - or something like that. A great combination of different music styles! Nearly the same way as the current Trip-hop fever - in Trip-hop you also do have often a female vocalist and a DJ who samples/scratches rough sounds to the sweet sweet voice. Nearly the same is the basis for Heavenly Grooves, but only more orientated at the ethereal side combined with slow-motion-grooves and trance...

All of Hyperium's labels can be contacted via HYPERIUM, PO BOX 910127
90259 NURNBERG, GERMANY. Let Oli know your thoughts on the CD.

Special thanks from TEQ to OLIVER and all at HYPERIUM.

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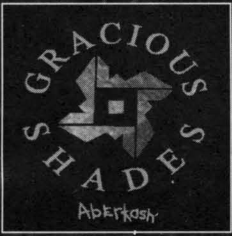

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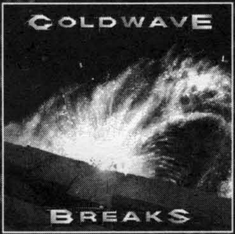

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'70 GWEN PARTY SIGN TO A MAJOR RECORD COMPANY?"

70 GWEN PARTY

'File Under: Misc.'

deadhead

Anyone interested in the Indie music scene should be aware of 70 Gwen Party. If you haven't heard any of their music, more than likely being aired on John Peel, then you should at least be aware of the duo's strong opinions on the industry in general. A steady series of 7" singles and an album, "Optical Glass Empire", have included worded statements on trying to work within a corrupted industry.

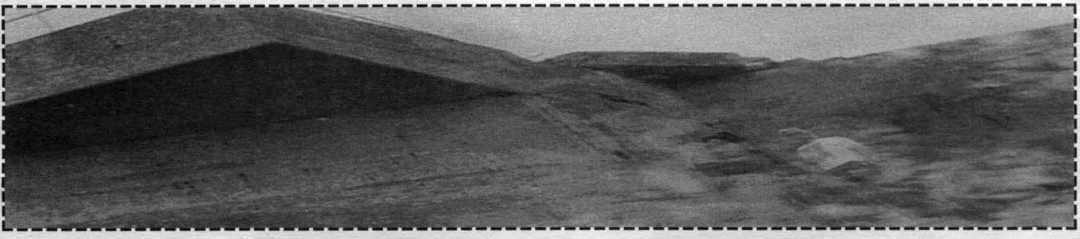
This first-hand written reporting should, though extremely entertaining and enlightening, should not take anything away from the recorded works of this duo. 70 Gwen Party are out on a limb and creating music which in no way can be put into a neat little box. It's hard to describe anyone as unique, but they're about as close as anyone is ever going to be. Independent, is a word which truthfully describes them in every detail.

Just who is it creating this stir? "70 Gwen Party are just two people, myself, Victor N'Dip and an old school friend, Lurgin Pin." And where do they come from?

"Even though we worked on various projects together over the past twelve years or so, the only recording to actually get pressed before 70GP was a self-financed single, when both part of a band called ISIS. This being a pretty disgraceful effort, means that any remaining copies are gleefully destroyed by ourselves - and should Record Collector ever quote high prices for this rare 7" don't be deceived, it will, in all probability be myself and Lurgin attempting to purchase and destroy any last evidence of its existence." You'd heard it here folks. Grab one quick before that double-page spread on them in RC.

Magazines like RC, who'll feature the trendy (collectible) Industrial bands, but nothing peripheral to it in depth, prompts Victor to remind me that it's not only thanks to John Peel for any 70 GP exposure. "It shouldn't be forgotten the roll played by the fanzine network, and smaller local BBC and independent radio shows, so it's been a mixture of outlets. I sometimes meet fanzine writers who become disillusioned with small sales, but having a small community of writers and broadcasters who have their heads to the ground communicating throughout the world, alongside and in tandem with more powerful allies, e.g. the likes of John Peel, means that bands like 70GP can still exist freely outside the 'Major' dominated industry and its press." And it must be realised that a lot of the so-called independent press are dominated by the majors, and the larger indies, who are in reality just small 'majors' They rely on support through advertising revenue, etc., and they will do anything to keep that, i.e. sucking up to the bigger labels. It's the game, it's how it works folks, though of course there are still some writers who actually care about music in general. "It has to be stressed that there have been some writers from the 'major' press who have been of support to us (Jonathan Selzer and The Stud Brothers amongst others at MM), but of course it's the editors in these papers who are all powerful, and have prevented our band from receiving any real exposure over the past six years. The reasons for this I have outlined in detail on our sleevenotes, but in brief are mainly due to our reluctance to conform musically or politically to the strict 'Biz' set of rules, as laid down by the all powerful major record company system."

So, where, if anywhere does 70 Gwen Party fit into the scheme of things with its pioneering sound? "I think the main thing for us is to stay open, without prejudice to as many different ideas/influences as possible. Musically this is not difficult for us, because I think we are both excited to hear new sounds and new ideas. Also for our own writing to break down barriers, pushing music forward, rather just copying 'rock school' style any past eras of music (i.e. 'dead art' which reflects the politics/attitudes of a past age, not embracing the problems/ideas of today). It pains me to see that our present media are so obsessed with the past, but I suspect that most of the people in control are frightened of change, and of new music and new arts, despite what the people in power try to tell us are a catalyst for change, and those 'rich' 'contented' people are very reluctant I think, to champion new music's (whether intentionally or not), because the changes brought about may upset the cosy world in which they remain in power." The situation isn't helped of course, by the number of press people (the ones in the power) who were raised with the whole Sixties era, hence we've had the Manchester scene(s) and a whole host of others who are merely rehashing the Stones, Faces , etc... Young blood is what's needed, but not just any young blood, fresh faces with their ears at ground level, rather than noses inside fat cheque-books.



When you sit and analyse, it does become pretty depressing, especially for those bands who really do have something original. I guess the only way is to keep banging on the doors? 70GP aren't that far removed from being pop music for god's sake. "In the short term it's a difficult battle, but eventually I think, people realise you may have something new to say, rather than just digging up a load of riffs and quotes which reflect the world thirty years ago, but of course we don't expect the major record companies to be banging on our door, nor would we sign with them while their repressive slave contract system remains."

The band do give credit where it's due, and have publicly aired views of worthiness for the BBC on the new CD, and that's not heard too often. Surely, though for all the good work the BBC do, they really are just another large corporation and can be equally as restrictive? "As I stated on the "Peel Sessions" sleevenotes, 70GP probably would not be able to exist without the BBC, and particularly the John Peel show. Although the BBC is a large corporation, it is of course owned by 'us' and is a public service. This means that people like Peel can, and should be able to broadcast music because they feel it is good without the straight-jacket of having to sell adverts in the short-term to make profit. The private media is owned and sponsored by a rich elite, and dominated by the major record companies. Therefore it is not within the interests of these media's to support bands with the political views of 70GP.., and they don't! A paper like the NME projects itself as some sort of left-wing defender of the arts - in theory a perfect platform for the views of 70GP - but in practise of course the paper is owned by a massively rich and powerful publisher which has a self-interest in suppressing our views, whilst pumping the conformist major, or pseudo Indie bands. So, all in all when you keep reading in the press, week after week, the slagging the BBC gets, remember it's within those papers interests to destroy the BBC, not OURS." It really is black and white. "John Peel got to hear about us from us just from sending demo tapes, and eventually records, which he has always played - i.e. no pluggers, P.R.'s, biz bribes, JUST THE MUSIC alone, which is the way it should be." How many DJ's, writers can you say that of?

The band's output for all their existence has been through their own Snape Records label. I guess a necessity after weighing up the industry alternatives? "It's pretty much a Catch 22 situation. You can only really compete if you are signed to a major label (or one of their 'pretend' indies), but as I've outlined earlier these labels are in general not very interested in experimental, or artists that challenge the system. So, you are forced to put records out on your own label, but of course, you get practically no press, and even with national airplay your records rarely get in the shops, mainly due to the increasing power of the 'chains' like Our Price who only stock Top 100 records (How are you supposed to get a Top 100 record if your records don't get in the shops in the first place? The majors' seem to know!). The bottom line is, if you're a label putting out music truly independently you're up against the full might of the major system - and the majors will do all in their power to stop you competing, they are, after all just businesses which have become so powerful they can stamp on competitors at will.

"Were this just an ordinary business manufacturing 'cat food' it would be bad enough, but the fact that we are dealing with the arts here, an expression and outlet for those in society 'oppressed' with no other real voice, it's frightening that a small bunch of very rich individuals should, more and more, be deciding what music we are able to hear, buy or experience. The last thing in the world these powers want to happen is for labels like ours to succeed, to show that you don't have to sign slave major record deals, and you can express yourselves without 'their' permission, so I'm afraid it's doubtful they'll ever let a band and label like ours ever really get off the ground."

The above only relates to once you've actually manufactured something to be distributed to the public! 70GP have been staunch supporters of vinyl in this digital age, which is no wonder when you know the truth behind just how much big labels can make from CD sales. However, with the band's "Peel Sessions" they've succumbed to the inevitable and released on CD. "To make a CD only release after all these years was a pretty hard decision to make, but I'm sure the vast majority of people who buy our stuff understand that doing an album on vinyl now is only a slightly better option than doing it on 78! Even many of the 'Chain with No Name' shops do very little, or no LP's on vinyl now, so unfortunately we've been forced to change format. My main regret being that we couldn't do a cassette version for those people without a CD player. Having said that, although I personally prefer the sound of vinyl it is now cheaper to make a double LP (as was our Peel sessions) on CD because it has 80 minutes playing time per disc. So we could put all four sessions on one disc plus two extra tracks fairly cheaply and sell it at a single LP price. So, all in all, whereas once the CD was an overpriced luxury for yuppies, in some cases it can prove better value to the buyer. Now with a whole generation growing up unable to buy vinyl LP's, I suppose the change is inevitable.

"We shall still continue to put out 7" singles, because they are still the best way of getting a single track out. Of course, 12" singles still flourish in the Dance world, so I don't think we'll be waving goodbye to vinyl just yet."

As luck would have it a new 7" is on the way, entitled "Scorching the Anti-Christ" "who could that be about folks?" I wonder Victor! The band are also keeping fingers crossed for another session courtesy of Mr. Peel and plan a new album early in the New Year, finances permitting. But, before we go in my perverse sense of pleasure I ask Vic for one more thought to chew upon, and got more than I bargained for...

"70 GWEN PARTY SIGN TO A MAJOR RECORD COMPANY? A bit far-fetched after all you've just read, but this strangely enough may be the case. In early 1993, during a pretty bad financial patch 70GP signed a deal with the totally independent T.V.T. Records in New York (home of NIN, Wax Trax!) having refused to consider any major-funded Indies. We made sure the deal didn't cover the UK, so we are still able to release our own stuff here. After signing the deal and delivering some master tapes and artwork, we could gain no further communication with the label. All this was a bit strange considering their enthusiasm for the band and the fact many of the recordings to be released we'd already made and been approved. Only in very recent times have we discovered that TVT shortly after signing us were bought by a major label, and that, in theory they have the rights to 70GP material throughout the world, and could, also in theory, prevent us releasing any material outside the UK. To this day the company refuses to part with recordings and artwork that belong to us, and have failed to make any releases by 70GP

"All this is just typical of how the law and contracts are always on the side of the large corporations. In our case to escape the contract would probably cost a small fortune with no guarantee of success, meanwhile the major record company involved can prevent us from releasing material outside the UK. As to the reasons for doing this? We'll you've read this interview so make your own minds up. Whether you accept or believe all you read in this piece is obviously down to you, but if we've illustrated in even the smallest way that the music industry is not as free and open to the expression of us all as individuals (rather than the sledgehammer expressions of the rich elite) then it's served its purpose. As always get paranoid."

'Just turn the fucking thing up Mick, don't worry about what it sounds like'

DEREK BAILEY

Who's Afraid Of The Big Bad Junglists? Not Derek Bailey, as stefan jaworzyn finds out...

Jungle, eh? Breathes there a sentient human bean with an IQ into double figures who would admit to liking jungle? Kodwo Eshun's gobbledegook rhapsodising over jungle's 'attributes' (assuming one can begin to comprehend what he's talking about...) clearly illustrates some of the many seemingly inconsistent, incongruous & irreconcilable approaches to jungle - do you write about it, dance to it, listen to it on your stereo at home? Is jungle's metamorphosis from white label obscurity, blasted out at maximum volume in clubs & on pirate radio stations, to packaged and more easily marketed CDs a sell-out, a dilution of its musical integrity, a redundant & morally questionable music business scam? Was this stuff ever meant to be 'consumed', especially by middle class pseudo-intellectuals? Fucked if I know. As art it's as culturally relevant to me as '70s Munich disco. As music it has a certain unpleasant fascination (the old traffic accident principle) but it wears off faster than a drag on the old crack pipe...

Well, perhaps there are other perspectives... A few months ago while Derek Bailey was showing me a short cut to Hackney Downs BR station I picked up on a comment he'd made earlier about how boring it was playing solo these days, and asked him if he still did any recording at home. The response was not what I expected... 'You're probably going to think this is absurd, but I've been playing along with jungle on the radio' He explained in more detail what appealed to him about it, and a week or so later he sent a cassette...There can be fewer bizarre concepts than that of combining of Bailey's guitar and jungle, but the tape sounded great. On a trip to New York he left a tape for John Zorn - and once Zorn got his hands on it events began to take their course...

And at some point or other in the nebulous future we should be treated to a CD of Bailey improvising to jungle music prepared by Ninj, a Birmingham junglist...

Who's actually funding this? Who's it for?

It's for DIW or one of Zorn's labels - I suggested it to him. I've been playing along with jungle *(taped from all-night pirate radio stations)* for about two years now and I sent him a tape and suggested I could do a record. I think he was touring with Pain Killer at the time - him, Laswell and Mick. They must have listened to it then. Zorn phoned me up and he goes *(imitates hyper American)* 'Yeah, *yeah*, great, beautiful'... He said it would be a very quick project to record and release...

So Zorn set up the deal with Ninj and Mick Harris?

Yes. I was just the guy who went up there and couldn't find a seat...

How did you get into jungle though?

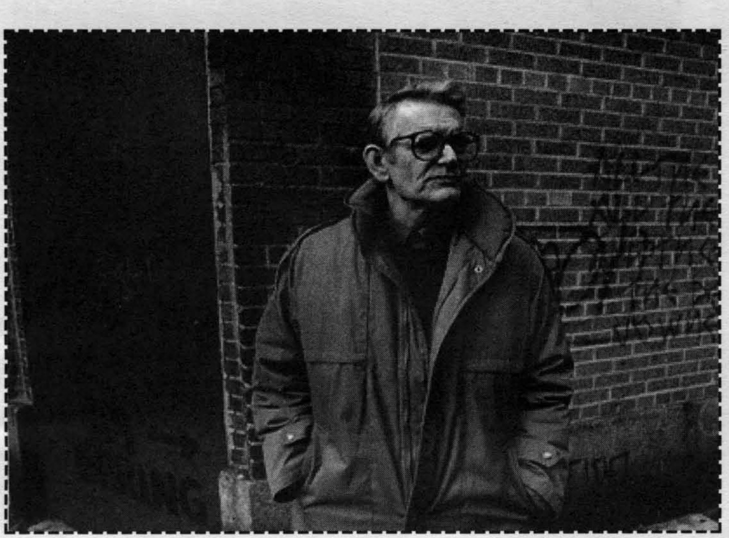
***(DB plays with radio for a while - horrible noise drowns out our voices on the tape)* The station's not there now - usually they've started by 5:30... They've no announcements - when they go off it just stops, when they come on it just blasts in... It's enormously loud - I get it accidentally sometimes when I'm just fucking about. So I've been listening to it, and I really like the way they do it on the radio - I have to say that in recent times it seems to have got softer, a lot less abrasive in some ways. There are more vocal samples, for example... But what I like about the radio is the live quality - although the stuff is records, they don't leave them alone - they'll talk over them, advertise gigs, order a pizza - the music's constant but with interruptions. It's very live - and with that sustained pace, which of course is inhuman... And it's nice to play along with, particularly as opposed to free jazz situations where the pace is often very slow. I've found it fantastic to practice with. So for a long time I've been doing that...**

I've always liked the parts where the music stops and drifts along - you get some ridiculous string orchestra, then it just slips a bit, the pitch goes or they slow it down or something. Then the drums come back - it's completely meaningless! I like that... What is a pain and can sometimes dilute it is the repetitive - looped or sampled - vocals...

The funny thing is, I've never heard a jungle record, all I've heard has been off the radio - the only piece of recorded jungle I've heard is by Ninj! It obviously operates at a different level...

So when's the CD coming out?

Well at this point it doesn't exist. The *project* exists - I *should* have recorded it by now. I was due to record it in June in Birmingham...But it turned out they don't have chairs there, so I couldn't record it. Well, I did *some* recording... The jungle music's by Ninj - a beautiful piece, about 50 minutes - in fact it's five pieces I think. He does mainly studio work I believe - an interesting character. So he'd done his thing... I got to the studio - all this had been arranged by from New York by Zorn and Laswell - the day before we were supposed to tape it. The studio was run by Mick Harris, a nice little place... I set up and tried a few things, then said to him, 'Have you got a chair because I sit down to play.' And he said, 'No'(!) then, 'Well, there's one in there' but it was no good because it had arms. So he didn't have any chairs - but there was his drum stool. So I said, 'Well, I'll try to the drum stool' but the drum stool was broken and it kind of weaved around. It spun round, but not only did it spin round but it conducted a circle in which it would spin - it would spin round in a circle, if you see what I mean - the upright was not upright...



It swooped...

Yep. So it was a fairly skillful business just keeping upright on it. (I should have asked Zorn for a chair. I realise now that when I got to Birmingham I should have phoned him and said 'There's no fucking chair here John - get a chair!') We got talking about the way to record, and he played me a bit of the jungle stuff and I said, 'Don't play it just now.' The I went back to the hotel, and I remembered about the chair, so I rang him up and said, 'Tomorrow, get a chair.' And he said, 'It's impossible.' So I left it with him anyway... I turned up the following day and there's no chair! I used the drum stool. It turned out that the drum stool wasn't really a problem. What *was* a problem was that Mick didn't seem capable of mixing a DAT and a live instrument. There were also some things that went on that were somewhat in the chair vein - like I played with the first piece then said, 'I'll just have a listen to that'. He replied, 'I didn't record it.' And I said 'What the fuck do you think I was doing?' and he said 'I thought you were just getting used to it.' So we started again. Anyway, we finished after about 40 minutes - by which time I'd been into the control box a few times. And by, let's say the third take, it was possible to detect that there was a guitar player. Now I was playing comparatively loud, but that doesn't mean anything if you're mixing - you're at the desk with a DAT and a live instrument - but there was nothing there *(on the DAT)*. Eventually, as time wore on, I could hear some plinking and plonking behind this very nice jungle stuff - a bit like rain falling on a roof, very softly. I said, 'Just turn the fucking thing up Mick, don't worry about what it sounds like.' But we never made it onto the tape; after about 40 minutes my spirits started to sag...

Uh...*(Longish pause)* So...

***(Laughs)* Ninj was there - I have to say his enthusiasm was the only thing that was sustaining me - he seemed knocked out by what was going on. It's just that none of what was going on was making it onto tape! So I finally said, 'We're going to stop this now.' And Mick - it seemed with some relief - said, 'Yeah. Maybe you could record it at Laswell's studio.' I bet I could. And they've probably got chairs too... So the two lads helped me down with my equipment and I got a taxi back to the station and that was the end of that session... It just completely baffled me - he seemed so relieved when I said 'Let's pack this up'... It *was* getting louder, but I was getting exhausted - when it finally got to the point where it was starting to register on tape I thought it should have been over!**

Anyway, I've got the Ninj DAT and the aborted DAT, so I'll probably take it over to New York with me in September. I've talked to Zorn about it and the arrangement is that we'll do it with Laswell.

So it's not as imminent as I'd originally thought...

Oh well, these things... Zorn's releases are backed up to the turn of century...

So Laswell will engineer it...?

No, it'll probably be Bob Musso - he's very good. Plus I can borrow his amp - he's got a fantastic old amplifier...

Bailey says that what he'd really like to do most is play a concert with 'live' jungle (ie: with a couple of DJs and several turntables for an uninterrupted flow of music), but there are obviously many attendant problems - not least the (presumable...) incompatibility of jungle and improvised music audiences, not to mention the difficulty of finding a suitable venue. I find this idea most appealing, and it strikes me as closer to Bailey's aesthetics than producing a CD with specially composed jungle. Well, I guess it now just remains to be seen what actually emerges from all the apparent chaos...

Fifth Quarter david ryley

Interesting things keep coming through the letter box... Along with a flier for a new take-away pizza dive featuring free garlic botulism with every family sized deep-pan came a package from QUARTERSTICK. JUNE OF 44 features members of Rodan and Codeine so it's not surprising when they sound like Slint. A pretty low-key affair for the most part, their album "Engine Takes To The Water" makes some fine understated noises worthy of any of those bands at their best. There's an underlying sense of threat to the whole thing with weedly guitar lines creeping slowly around your ankles until big scary discords leap out onto your head and ruin your hair. Definitely 'A Thing Worth Owning' for the sleeve if nothing else.They've taken a leaf out of Shellac's Encyclopaedia of Cool Packaging Ideas, and the CD comes in what looks like a hand printed fold around brown card sleeve. No crappy jewel case! Now your CDs can get as tatty as your old LPs! A trend to be encouraged I think.

Also from Quarterstick come RACHEL'S, more members of Rodan teaming up with Shellac's Bob Weston and about fifteen other musicians. This is much more unexpected; the instrumentation ranges from solo piano to orchestral strings, woodwind, guitars, several basses and tapes thrown in for good measure. One track rarely resembles another, except for a vaguely jazz thread through some of the songs Slapshot it is not. Thank God. I was going to call June of 44 'Art-Rock' until I heard this, which just goes to show what a tosser I am I suppose. I look forward to using this fine album to impress visitors with how bloody eclectic my musical tastes have become in my mature years. I shall then follow it with a good dose of the Ramones. You can get too much culture.

Another foolproof antidote to an over dose of culture over the years has been EARACHE RECORDS. Some of their recent releases have the look of a label trying to shake it's dodgy metal image and return to it's earlier pioneering form. DUB WAR have put out "Pain", a decent first album full of raging angst and Bad Brains riffs. On top of the obvious influences and some fierce musicianship are a multitude of ideas, something severely lacking in metal these days.This is big boys rock music, and if they have a fault it's that they never quite take the interesting stuff far enough, and seem intent on releasing as many dull remix singles and 12" double packs as could normally be expected to be squeezed out of the average Michael Jackson album.

If you want to see how remixes should really be done look no further than THE JOHN SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION. Their collection of experimental remixes by such hipsters as Beck, Mike D and Moby is the absolute tits. As well as six topping remixes of Blues Explosion material, mostly from the "Orange" album, you get an extended seventh track which consists of cut up bits of out takes, radio broadcasts and answer phone messages. Let's just hope this doesn't bring the Blues Explosion to the masses and make them into pop stars.

Earache's other worthy move of late has been the SILENCER single 'Fear and Drinking' The nearest reference point you'll probably get is Fugazi having afternoon tea with the Fall and coming to blows over the Battenburg. I finally got to see Silencer play live a few weeks ago and was more than a little pissed off when they did an instrumental set due to the singer having strained something. They got away with it but it doesn't really work as an instrumental thing. Headliners MAN OR ASTROMAN had no such worries. Not only are they meant to be an instrumental band in the first place, they are also FROM SPACE! Why

alien beings from beyond the stars should chose to come to our lowly planet and form the best Garagepunksurfrock combo ever is still a little unclear but I'm glad they did. Surely no native of Planet Earth could keep cracking jokes in that heat (or that hat for that matter). This band give real value for your Galactic Dollar; as well as educating us in the mysteries of Man Or Astroman slow-mo and constantly reminding us that they are FROM SPACE they break up the comedy set with some blistering chunks of twangy-tremelo-guitar~reverb-frenzy. They even sing for us a couple of times although most of the alien sounds they emit are too high for an earthling's hearing range. So apparentl back where they come from (SPACE), they aren't an instrumental band at all. Did I mention that they're FROM SPACE?

CHOCOLATE are not from space. They have the sad misfortune to come from Ipswich. I did some time in Ipswich so they have my full sympathy. 'Dead Skin' their 7" single on the new OUT OF STEP RECORDS is a fierce and bouncy punk-rock-thrash style thing which recalls The Stupids, Perfect Daze and Sink. This is probably because the band consists of ex-members of The Stupids, Perfect Daze and Sink. There is however, a little more to this band than might be expected given their pedigree; the B-Side is all Beastie Boys style hip-hop. An interesting mixture, one that the Beasties toy with themselves and it's good to hear Chocolate attempting something other than the obvious. They do it pretty well, but at the end of the day the whole thing suffers from being rushed. To really work this stuff needs weeks of studio time and a lot of weed. Give these talented old men a budget now! Certainly, it's a damn sight more palatable than most attempts at fusing rap and hardcore (see Downset, Biohazard and similar wank). There's also an album out soonish called "Hung Gifted and Slack" If you have a brain, like your punk rock and realise that Offspring are a bag of dog-dirt, contact Out Of Step at P.O. Box 7384, London N4 LTQ.

Material suitable for review in Fifth Quarter, i.e. guitar-oriented should be sent to the TEQ address for Dave Ryley

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To Love And Be Loved... In Europe

george

ANNE CLARK

Anne Clark is undoubtedly one of the generation's finest poets, an extremely accomplished musician within the realms of both electro-dance and more classical acoustics; and yet ignored in her homeland! Despite the lack of interest from these corroded shores she has been whipping up a storm in the rest of Europe for near on a decade. From the early recordings on 10 Records through to her current attachment to Germany's SPV she has accumulated an eminently accomplished back catalogue of releases.

So on the eve of the delivery of Anne's latest album "To Love And Be Loved", another emotive explosion of verse, I thought it was time to find out what makes this lady of strong words and even stronger passions tick.

With an overflowing history of achievement it's very hard to equate how Anne can still go unnoticed in the UK, yet relying on the music media here, you could quite easily not know she even exists! It must be a soul-destroying experiencing with such a lack of support and success in your homeland, "What can I say? (Hang on I just have to get my sour grapes!). At first it bothered me but having spent so much time abroad and working with people, living with people outside of Britain, I can see clearly what a tiny tiny little miserable moaning place it is. It hates change. It hates anything new or different or challenging. Everytime I come back it feels like it's slipped back another 100 years in mentality. Just look at the way people view integration with Europe over here! I don't give a fuck about England and it doesn't give a fuck about me so let's leave it at that. It needs the rest of the world more than the world needs it... and so do I".

So it's not surprising Anne defected to Europe. "It wasn't the lack of attention here that sent me to Europe but the attention there and the sense of belonging. Britain is an island nation and it shows. Europe is about movement, expression, experiment and open-mindedness the British couldn't even dream of"

"The Law is an Anagram of Wealth"; a powerful statement which easily epitomises the system in the UK was the title of Anne's equally powerful 1993 release and for many her finest studio excursion to date. When considering the statement deeper, I wonder if our enemy really is the corrupt system or are we just being destroyed by the complacency of the masses. Our loss of fight? "Yes, of course, the corrupt system here is the enemy, but corruption is global. There's a lot more than the "system" that bothers me here. Where's the empathy of the people? Even that is controlled by the dire class structure we're riddled with in Britain. All those middle-class radicals "rebelling" against their families, slumming it. Joining this organisation. That protest. Then once they've got over their soiree into guilt for being so privileged they go back to take over their dads' business or become lawyers to keep the corruption going.

"Why should I - somebody born working class, just sit back and accept them slumming it in South London for a few years while they condemn me for wanting to move away from the poverty and ignorance and lack of opportunity that coming from that kind of background means. The middle class is society and even more frightening is that it creates/controls the so-called opposition to society, so nothing will ever change. Maybe if the working class didn't have such a fear and hatred of "knowledge" things might change. But until then... Curiosity is a crime for the working classes...

"In Britain we don't educate people. We train them. Never giving any scope for the potential each and everyone of us have. Keep everything nice and safe and stable and... stale. I was amazed at the imbalance between the number of people who go to university for e.g. in Europe and here. You don't necessarily have to be privileged to get an education out there. No wonder so many people here are so complacent when they're never encouraged to do anything"

The sort of control evident in the Criminal Justice Bill, basically forbidding the freedom of "self" "The Criminal Justice Bill? What can I say? What could be more appropriate for a nation that excels in looking backwards?"

Looking more closely at the content of "The Law...", an album which included the poems of Friedrich Ruckert's, for some one who is more than capable of penning extremely passionate and evocative verse what inspired Anne to use Ruckerts work? "Friedrich Ruckert's poems I discovered listening to a Kathleen Ferrier recording of some Mahler songs. The translations were included and friends in Germany sent me other translations and I was just overwhelmed by the poignancy of his words. So much of the stuff from the "Romantic" period seems unbearable now but Ruckerts' thoughts and observations could have been written today. They're timeless, the way he can transfer deep, intense emotions, all that abstraction, into something so simple and expressive. It's beautiful"

So who else may we find interwoven in her repertoire?

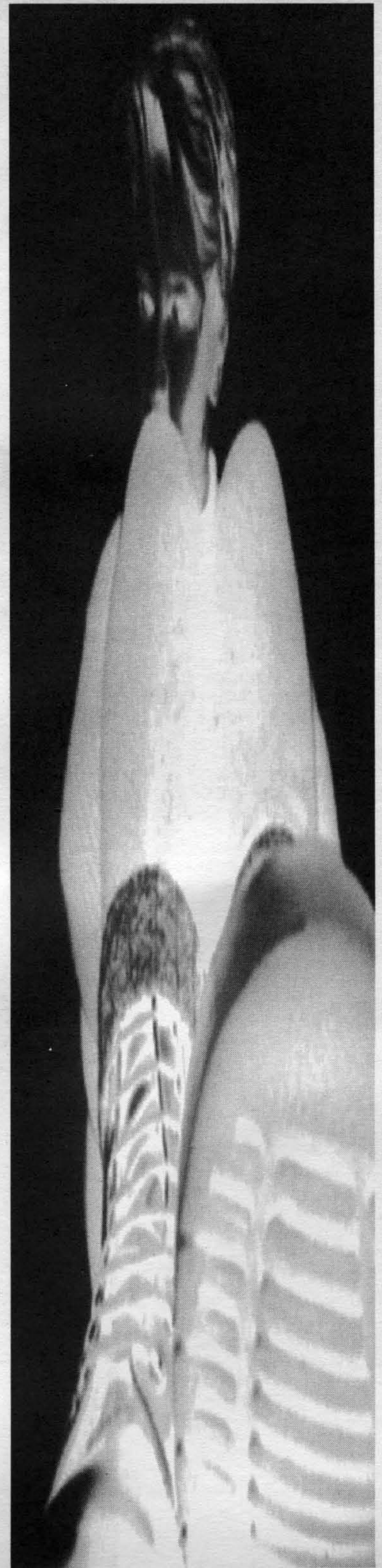
"Other poets whose stuff I've used are ol' Grumpy Larkin! and Andrew Motion, a poem called Dedication. Also I'm working on a poetry project Bill Laswell is putting together."

Earlier material from Ms Clark was predominately electro-dance productions, yet her last studio release, "The Law..." was based around a more acoustic forte - is this a conscious move away from the electronic medium? "With regards to moving away from electronic styles, I haven't really you know! (As you'll hear on "To Love And Be Loved"). I've always dabbled with acoustic sounds. I just wanted to bring them more to the foreground for a period, At the time of making the "Unstill Life" and "The Law Is..." albums I had gone through some enormous changes in my life and it just seemed the right way to express all that. I also wanted to see how it could work live which is why I did the acoustic tour last year. "Psychometry" is the document of that. Even so, I really enjoy weaving all these sounds in and out of each other - electronic and acoustic. It now seems perfectly right to go back to purely electronic sounds but I think the influences of the more "stripped" sounds have played a big part in shaping my new album. "

Did this change of style affect your audience at all?

"The audience I have never ceases to amaze me. Their loyalty is incredible. They go through all these changes with me and they still stay there. Of course some people won't like it and that's fair enough but then there seems to be a new audience each time as well. What amazes me when I go on tour is that the audience's ages go from about 16 - 40 years old."

Over the years many collaborations have manifested within Clark's material from early years with David Harrow and John Foxx to more recent times with Peter Becker and Martyn Bates (Eyeless In Gaza). Quite a diverse catalogue... "Well, David Harrow I've known since I was this * high! I met him through organising music/poetry etc. events at the Warehouse Theatre in Croydon years ago. We both had an insatiable love of keyboards and gadgets and so we just went for it. It worked really well... so long ago.... and I'm still hearing the 'Sleeper In Metropolis' or 'Our Darkness' sequences popping up in stuff to this day! As for John Foxx... It just seemed a good idea at the time really. I'd signed to Virgin. He was already with them. I wanted to work with a producer for a change so it went from there. I would have liked to have taken it further really but at the time we were both going down very separate paths. He's a very interesting musician. Martyn Bates & Peter Becker? ... well ... we'd originally come into contact years ago, playing a lot of the same venues around England and on occasions the same bill. However, I went off to Europe and nothing more came of it. Then, several years back, I was going through a really difficult time and I came across Martyn's solo album 'The Return Of The Quiet' and some of the material just affected me so deeply. Helped me deal with things I just didn't think I could get through. So anyway, I made contact with him and we wrote to each other (I was living in Norway at the time) and something very special came from it all and it just seemed natural to try out things on a creative level... and it's been great working with Pete and him. I hope it never stops!"



Having already shared studio time with the cream of a crop is there anyone Anne is dying to work with?

"I don't know about "dying" to work with anyone! but there have certainly been people I've wanted to work with and I've been very fortunate that a lot of the time it has come together, but it changes all the time. I would have liked to have worked with Brian Eno or Laurie Anderson once upon a time... I would very much like to work with Diamanda Galas... and on a more visual level a dream would be Krystof Kioslowski, Atom Egoyan or Ulrika Ottinger - yeah, I'd come pretty close to dying to work with any of them!"

Turn to any of the many releases of the years and you are confronted by lyrics harbouring a strong evocativeness, overflowing with emotional textures, yet at times the angry "political/social" edge is almost reminiscent of the angst of, say, Bragg or Ochs...

"Influences are enormous and continually changing. But sleeping, waking, sex, love, friendship, frustration, fear, anger, joy, beauty. More and more very simple things take on such importance. I don't know about Billy Bragg etc! I've never felt any affiliation to him particularly. Obviously the punk things that were happening, while I was growing up, played a huge part in enabling me to channel what I was feeling. Patrik Fitzgerald was a big influence back then. Billy Childish, REALLY ANGRY PEOPLE not the contrived "cup-cake" merchants that the literary and university set have let loose on us!... Patti Smith - and at the other extreme Jacques Brel, Tim Buckley, Brian Eno."

Lyrically each composition presents itself as an emotional explosion be it anger, joy, sadness or bitterness - feeling so spontaneous - but are they written with such spontaneity? "Life's made up of spontaneous moments and events isn't it? All disjointed. All awkwardly filling the days and years of our lives. Somehow we have to make some kind of logic from it all. Often the initial idea for a lyric or a piece of music will be very spontaneous. I'll very quickly put something down then come back to it when I have a bit more perspective or have added another element to the idea. After all everything is basically without meaning isn't it?!"

Without meaning maybe, yet there is a great deal of meaning behind many of her recordings no more so than inclusion of Philip Larkin's biting 'This Be The Verse' on her 1987 recording "Hopeless Cases" as well as live albums "RSVP" and "Psychometry". An extremely powerful and poignant statement on parenting *"They fuck you up, your mum and dad, They may not mean to but they do, They fill you with the faults they had, And add some extra, just for you"* Could the suggestion of a circle of abused to abuser be true?

"'This Be The Verse' - Well yes, unfortunately I do believe in the circle of abused and abuser to be true. It needn't be... but we as a species would have to take on a whole different load of priorities to change it, I think. This is where LOVE plays such an important role... and responsibility for each other.... People have kids like having a dog and when the kid gets on their nerves or they just can't deal with the demands it entails they just slap it or stick it in the corner. Wandering around the supermarket can be quite a lesson in human behaviour! Have you ever seen parents with a small child in that situation? The frustration and rage that explodes sometimes is frightening! What's so terrible is so often you can see that it's the parents who have the problems, yet rather than face those or deal with them they put it all on the children."

So what are the motivations behind her own finely penned explosions of emotion? "My motivations to create are my frustration, my anger, insecurity, impatience, joy at being able to be overwhelmed by the beauty it's possible to experience. A hornets' nest of stuff!"

Speaking of hornets' nest what is it really like to be a female in the music business - as hard as it seems and is legend to be? "...Well yes - everything you've heard is true! There's little respec and lots of contempt especially if you dare to deal with anythin on a serious level. There's just total incomprehension. However... When women go the whole way ... live the real "Rock n Roll" lifestyle - they're condemned for that too. Have you read that 'biography' of Nico by Richard Witts? Most of it consists of him slagging her off for being a junkie and shagging around! If it was a book about Keith Richards or some other wanker, all those elements would be cause, for hero-worship! What's going on?!"

What's going on? Well from my experience, it's a sad side of human nature, insecure people who are afraid of equality on any level - you find they normally have a high profile in most industries, blind, narrow-thinking little people! But that's just one of the ideal motivations to rise above and keep on fighting; and Anne has been out there for almost a decade fighting and producing a most superior portfolio - with ten years behind what about ten years from now?

"What would I like to be doing 10 years from now is shagging around and taking drugs of course!! - No, I'd like to be well, and as working is such an important part of my life I still hope to be doing that - even if it's just writing and working with music just for myself. I'd like to be living somewhere warmish, by the sea and with a house full of friends. Hopefully living with positivity instead of negativity.

"As for the immediate future... Well, there's the Bill Laswell project and "To Love And Be Loved" is due for release in August though not in England of course! In the Autumn I'm going on tour, though not in England of course! "

England may be deservedly in the dog-house but there will always be a place saved for Anne in this green and pleasant Quarter...

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"I hate dance music - it bores me to death"

ALEC EMPIRE

'The Empire Strikes Back'

deadhead

Regulars to the Eurobeat 2000 club in London, a hardcore techno sweatbox, will no doubt be familiar with the Alec Empire name. Sheep On Drugs fans may have witnessed his band Atari Teenage Riot supporting, or if you're none of the above might have been lucky enough to catch one of his two solo albums on the groundbreaking Mille Plateaux label.

Alec has been a DJ and producer since 1990, working in the jungle, acid and techno fields simultaneously. He is another non-stop worker, a breed which has flourished through the ease with which one can utitilise today's technology. Even so, any artist with any ounce of worth must have a talent inside him/herself. Alec Empire has, and he has it flowing from every possible orifice. I was immediately taken with his "Limited Editions 1990-94" set for its sparkling use experimental rhythms and seductive sequences. It was an album with a real 'up' feel, though also contained strong messages through darkly toned passages. "Generation Star Wars" followed this year. A much harder statement and really leaning on the listener to understand the young man's battle against commercialism and the frustrations of working in such a narrow-blinded marketplace. The title may have sci-fi nerds in a spin, but he's no space cadet.

Not being aware too heavily of Atari Teenage Riot and all his work previous to the two solo albums above, I ask him about ATR as I was intrigued that they'd been signed to a major label in this country, Phonogram, though after only a year he left them. "Atari Teenage Riot is my band and it's taking most of my time cause we play live a lot... We just released our album "1995" on Digital Hardcore Records." DHR is Alec's own label, which we'll speak more of later. Is ATR merely a musical entity? "We are doing two films. One is about the Berlin Digital Hardcore underground-scene, and in the other movie ATR's playing the main roles and we are doing the soundtrack as well. This is more a violent sci-fi-action-trash film with some rough sex scenes..." More proof of working temperament in overdrive, as if any was needed. So, what else is he up to dare I ask? Still DJing at Eurobeat? "Yes, I'm a DJ as well, but WHO IS NOT in '95?" Well, me for starters. Punters, think yourselves lucky... Is that why you spend much of your time in the UK? "There are many reasons I spend so much time in the UK. When we released the "Destroy Deutschland" EP we came on the lists of some Neo-Nazi organisations - this was at the same time when we did the Phonogram/Vertigo deal. We were travelling a lot. It's still not easy to plan where we'll be next week! My place of residence is in London at the moment. Since the ATR "1995" release we have the German Police ("Verfassungsschutz") on our back because we have some 'unconstitutional' lyrics on this album. As you see we have a lot of problems in our 'native' Germany."

The German viewpoint is not as open as one would like to think then. Is the music industry in Germany any better? "In general you can say that English people like to hear new stuff, perhaps more 'original' stuff than Germans." Hmm... "The English music business takes more risks on new bands, etc., because they gained a lot in the past trying out new different things." Hmm... "The Germans want U.S. or UK copies when it comes down to bands. What Dance music concerns, they love shit German Euro-techno with stupid English singing on the top, a la Hadaway, or Westbam... Where would you prefer to live?" I guess he has a point. Have you been unlucky enough to hear Scooter, for instance. They're fucking massive over there, and it's the most banal, pre-pubescent drivel there has quite possibly ever been. The fact that they're linked to the techno scene over there, says a lot. But I would still have to question Alec's view of the way the UK label system works - or doesn't. He has first hand knowledge though, so, who am I to question?

Despite all this ATR activity Alec had obviously been working quietly on other projects. Or maybe not so quietly... "I did my first EP in '91 and since then I released a lot of stuff on Force Inc." Force Inc being Mille Plateaux's parent company with whom Alec first, and is still loosely signed to. "Most of it was Hardcore Breakbeat, not like the UK Breaks, mine was more distorted, faster and more evil! My EP's on vinyl are special releases which stand out alone, they don't build up to an album." But, if these EP tracks didn't have an album feel, why then collect a bunch of stuff together for "Limited Editions"? "I recorded a lot of strange shit in the last years and when I think the time is right to put it out then I'm gonna do it! In '94 Mille Plateaux did need a first solo artist album, so it was perfect for "Limited Editions 90-94" Certain things were changing in my life. I felt that there was a big cut, for me Techno died completely! I saw this album as an end of a part in my life, like you have to close a chapter or

That album could certainly not be classified as being 'straight' techno. How do you decide which tracks fit where? "Usually I write and record first and then I start to think which label could fit. In the beginning Mille Plateaux was a bit different. You can see what I mean when you listen to the first "Modulation & Transformation" compilation." Yes, this album, although included material by the likes of Empire and Vogel, also featured Aphex Twin's 'On' and artists like Ian Pooley and Air Liquide, so does tend to fall out of the experimental category somewhat. "I would call it further developed Detroit techno perhaps? It's interesting to see how it has changed over the last eighteen months." Definitely for the better, and that's why Mille has such a strong image stamping.

This development at the label can also be viewed in the transition from "Limited Editions" and "Generation Star Wars". I think the first title is much more immediate, but the press didn't pick up on it. Why? "I don't know why... Perhaps we had a lot of press in England with ATR a few months before? "Generation Star Wars" is a strong statement against the society and the rave-scene. I can understand that the press picked up on it." Ah, yes the good old so-called 'Left-Wing' press here love a working class ethic - if it suits them at the time, of course. With this new press exposure are you more likely to record the next project in a similar vein? "What my future work concerns I think I wanna try to release more 'weird German shit', strange electronic music in general." A healthy view, not to get stuck in the rut of pumping out release after release, although knowing of course, that the press coverage would be there ready and waiting. "My next album is going to be very low - no adrenalin at all, clean hip-hop-beats with a lot of reverb effects." Sounds dubby? "It sounds like a turtle on valium I think! I already started work on another album which is more an electronic striptease and evil 303 rock'n'roll record." Whaaat! You'll be doing a 'concept' album next... "I think I should do an industrial album as well sometimes..." Yes. Yes. YES PLEASE!

It's plainly clear that Alec sees himself in many roles within the dance music frame. Why is this so important to you? "I hate dance music - it bores me to death. I don't wanna be some DJ-slave! "Oh they play Euro-Trance-House with Jungle influences now - so quick, let's produce this" NOT WITH ME!" Can't ask for a much more emphatic answer than that to explain his vast recorded output. Having not viewed him as a DJ, I guess that must be a pretty schizophrenic experience too.

Visually, Alec is at work on the films previously spoken of, but I also caught a video on MTV's "Chill Out Zone" the other day. From the "Limited Editions" album, it was the 'Civilisation Virus' track. A long, slow meandering epic, which from the video's stylish images of two naked figures walking around a perplexed cityscape, took to have strong meaning. "'Civilisation Virus' is the soundtrack of the same film done by Philipp Reichenheim, a good friend of mine (we did breakdance together at the age of 11!!!), a short film about two people who come out of the wilderness into a big city... They end up with confused minds and a big nervous breakdown. There are no word in this film so the music explains what's going on. The film is a bit hippie, but has a very strong political message to it. Check it out!" Yes, it was pleasantly different from all the usual computer-generated drivel the show normally goes with.

With all the activity recording and DJing I wondered how Alec has found the time to launch his own label, Digital Hardcore Recordings? It's a logical step, but his days must be filled beyond any time for sleep! Thankfully, Alec isn't about to recount any tales of never sleeping for more than two hours at a time. No drug-addled haze fuels his day (or night). Having the label must be a handy tool to ensure his recordings can become even more diverse. How'd DHR come about? "DHR was built up from the money out of the Phonogram deal." Good to see someone coming away from 'major' involvement with some cash in their pocket... "We have three directors; Peter Lawton, the ATR manager does most of the business side. David Harrow from On-U-Sound was producing our two EP's on Phonogram. And when our friend and former manager Matt Craver died in a car-crash we decided that Peter, who is involved in On-U-Sound as well, should take over. The third one apart from me is Joel Amaretto, a Berlin journalist who I've known since Acid-House - he does the promotion side (of course!)." Is the label specifically targeted for ATR material? "There is a new radical young underground around ATR, we call the music Digital Hardcore. It's about punk and speed-metal guitars on top of distorted breakbeats with screaming manga girls and a lot of political shouting." Sounds pretty wild? "There's massive stage-diving and pogoing going on at the shows. No raving! We signed the most important acts out of this scene (EC80R, Sonic Subjunkies, Kill Out Trash, etc...). There's a lot to do, there's so much material. So much new exciting music with a strong political message done by real bands. RIOTSOUNDS PRODUCE RIOTS! RAVERBASHING!" This is obviously a scene which has steered away from my own gaze. Good to see that there are actual bands involved rather than just DJ's, and with political intentions too. "There are a lot of problems caused by this system which supports more and more a minority of rich conservatives and right-wing assholes! We can't identify with all that cosmic, open your mind shit. We release stuff that deals with our reality! The next thing we will put out is the Digital Hardcore compilation, "Harder Than The Rest", including a lot of brand new exclusives, some of the early EP's and some unreleased live footage."

Anyone reading the above may assume that the man is in his thirties, or late twenties at least. I was amazed to find out that Alec was only 21 according to the latest press blurb (though this turned out to be a little exaggerated!). But, even at 23 which he celebrated becoming in May, he's achieved a hell of a lot. "I always made music, bought a lot records... Had my first punk band at the age of 12. Was offered the first major deal at 16..." It goes on... Has this man with a mission a wise-head on those shoulders then? "I don't think that I'm wise yet," Modest, yes.., "but I can understand that it might sound strange for some people that I had 38 releases so far!" He then goes on to inform me that this figure of 38 doesn't even include remixes and other production work! May the force be with him...

"When a band surprises me with their music that's for me a good reason to release it"

DAFT RECORDS

'Kneel To The Boss'

deadhead

Regular readers to this magazine will be familiar with the extremities of DIVE. Dirk Ivens, the driven maniac of that rhythmic pounding is now back behind the wheel of his own DAFT label. Three releases have just been exhaled from his exhaust fumes, and all match the man's own four star explosions. Varying in output, Hybryds, Esplendor Geometrico and Master/Slave Relationship all share his enthusiasm and pride in producing music of worth.

Knowing that he had been involved in managing a record label before I wondered what had prompted this new burst of activity? "As I am a musician myself, ex-Klinik and now DIVE, I have been always interested in what other people do. As a matter of speaking it controls my life. I started in the early days with Body Records on which I mainly released compilation albums. To have a better distribution I signed a contract with Antler Records, but it didn't work out that well. Therefore, with DAFT I have a brand new start.

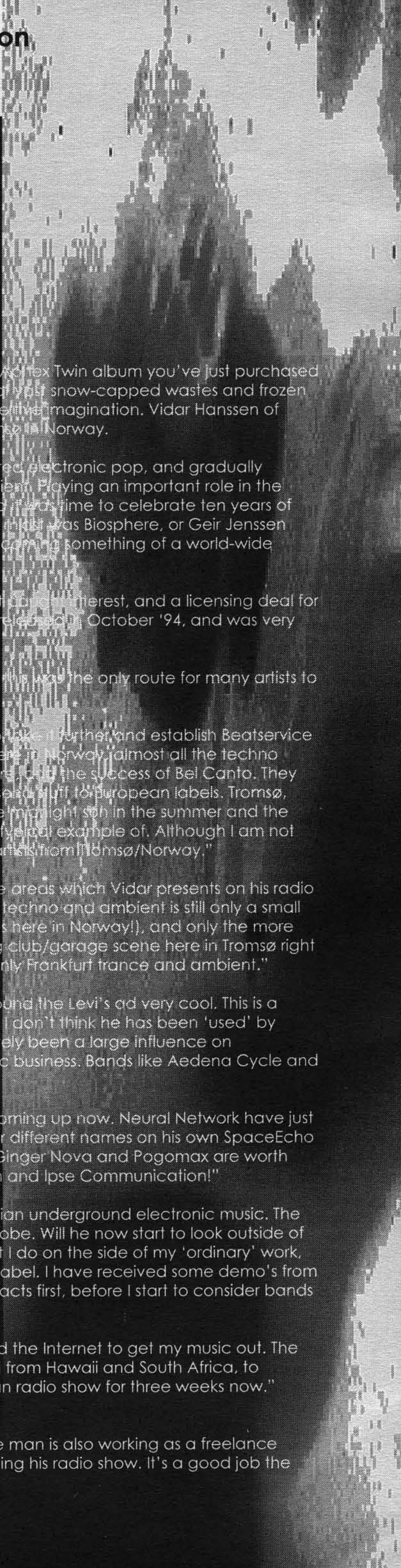
"The most important thing is to sign bands who are working with a sound that is in a way original. This could be industrial, ambient or electro. When a band surprises me with their music that's for me a good reason to release it." Amen. But what in your mind makes alternative musicians create in ways that mainstream musicians avoid, and end up not repeating themselves with past trends and categories? "I think people and bands are always influenced by the music and the world in general they are living in today. You can't say, 'now I am gonna make a record that sounds like 15 years ago', because of the time, ideas and technology we are living with today. Bands and trends will come and go, but music will always be made and nobody can say how it will sound ten years from now, and that's the interesting part."

It's refreshing to hear a record biz person (and that is of course what Dirk is - or is he?) uttering words of actually being interested in the music he's releasing. And with calibre artists such as Muslimgauze and Blackhouse following shortly, surely the obvious move is to release his own DIVE material on DAFT too? "Yes, the next DIVE CD will come out on DAFT in September, and it will be a soundtrack for a short movie made by the Italian band Sigillum S. The twelve tracks are sounding completely different than the DIVE material before, and I'm sure a lot of people will be surprised in a positive way." No clues offered as to what form this new sound will take, but if you managed to catch him either touring with Esplendor in Germany or out on his own in Japan you'll no doubt have found out.

"Besides the new DIVE CD "Grinding Walls" we will release the debut CD of a very promising new French band, Stigma, who are very much influenced by the sounds from The Klinik in the old days, but create their own style. We hope to receive more demos from bands, as I believe there's always some music that is worthy to be released."

And thank the lord for that. DAFT will no doubt be a label very much worth collecting, just as Dirk's own sounds are themselves.

"Geir Jenssen has definitely been a large influence on bands/artists..."



BEATSERVICE RECORDS

'From Light And Darkness...'

deadhead

Try to conjure up an image when listening to that new Laurent Garnier or Aphex Twin album you've just purchased in your local Our Price. What would be in your head? I bet many would hold pictures of vast snow-capped wastes and frozen waterways. Well, just imagine if you were actually living there, not having to use your fertile imagination. Vidar Hanssen of Beatservice Records is doing just that, and releasing music from his home-base of Tromsø in Norway.

From a radio background, he started a show in 1984 called 'Beatservice' which featured electronic pop, and gradually evolved to material like 242 and Nitzer Ebb, and now in the Nineties, techno and ambient. Playing an important role in the development of electronic music in the 50,000 population town of Tromsø, he decided it was time to celebrate ten years of the radio show by producing a compilation CD of home-grown techno. Already in his midst was Biosphere, or Geir Jenssen who had already gained a name for himself with Bel Canto, but now with R&S was becoming something of a world-wide celeb.

"The original idea was to press 500 copies by ourselves, but the Norwegian label Sonet gained interest, and a licensing deal for Scandinavia was signed. The "TOS.CD" (TOS is the short-name for Tromsø airport) was released in October '94, and was very well received by the Norwegian press."

It's quite ironic that Vidar should name his compilation after the airport as at that time this was the only route for many artists to reach out and get noticed through labels like Crammed Discs in Belgium.

"The quality and the amount of material I received for the "TOS.CD" convinced me to take it further and establish Beatservice as a label." Tromsø obviously has no lack of artists then? It's the scenery, I told you! "Here in Norway, almost all the techno have been from Tromsø. Some of the reason is the open-minded alternative scene here, and the success of Bel Canto. They opened doors for other creative minds, and inspired people to keep on working and send stuff to European labels. Tromsø, being a fairly small, isolated town up in the far north, very close to nature, and with the midnight sun in the summer and the dark period in the winter, are things that inspire a sort of Arctic feel that Biosphere is a typical example of. Although I am not quite sure if I agree that you can hear any unique "Arctic" feel in the various techno artists from Tromsø/Norway."

The compilation features bands right across the electronic spectrum and highlights the areas which Vidar presents on his radio show; ambient, techno, trance, etc. Are all these styles popular in Norway? "Actually, techno and ambient is still only a small sub-culture (the brilliant Plastikman album has, for example, sold only about 250 copies here in Norway!), and only the more commercial Euro-dance acts are what you can call 'big'. There is building up a strong club/garage scene here in Tromsø right now, but the popular styles in Norway in general (in the techno underground) are mainly Frankfurt trance and ambient."

Has the success of Biosphere and the use of his music in advertising helped at all? "I found the Levi's ad very cool. This is a great opportunity both for Biosphere and the genre to get to a bigger audience. And I don't think he has been 'used' by commercial forces, or 'sold out', or anything. By still living here Geir Jenssen has definitely been a large influence on bands/artists, both musically and personally, and being an important 'link' to the music business. Bands like Aedena Cycle and Scetch probably wouldn't have anything out if it wasn't for his help.

"Biosphere is THE techno/ambient artist in Norway, but there are a few bands/artists coming up now. Neural Network have just released their brilliant second album, and Stephen Groth has a string of releases under different names on his own SpaceEcho label (TB Moonchild, H20, etc.). And from the Oslo scene bands like Beta Frequency, Ginger Nova and Pogomax are worth checking out. Not to mention my next releases by Theory, Mind Over MIDI, Information and Ipse Communication!"

In a short space of time Beatservice has become a strong, if not, THE voice of Norwegian underground electronic music. The compilation and Electrip-C album contain some of the best music you'll hear in the globe. Will he now start to look outside of his own nation for new material? "At the moment Beatservice is an idealistic label that I do on the side of my 'ordinary' work, and it's taken step by step. At this time, I'm a strictly Norwegian techno and ambient label. I have received some demo's from American bands which are quite brilliant, but I want to build up a base of Norwegian acts first, before I start to consider bands from other countries.

"I am currently working on getting distribution deals around the world, and I have used the Internet to get my music out. The Electrip-C album was first launched through the Net, and has been very well received from Hawaii and South Africa, to America and Europe. And the promotion single has been on the playlist of a Canadian radio show for three weeks now."

As well as providing sounds which no-one has allowed the world access to before, the man is also working as a freelance writer for the music paper Puls, offering a mail order service in Norway and still continuing his radio show. It's a good job the days are longer during the summer over there.

SCREEN EDGE

> "Hey! Mr Firman when we get behind we work weekends and nights"

'The New Frontline'

george

"A treacherous trip to the power mad universe of the not so distant future" Film Threat

September sees the launch of a new independent video label Screen Edge which promises to bring new blood into the stagnant UK market. Screen Edge is a sister project to the already thriving Visionary which has bought us visions ranging from GBH and the Meteors, to Derek Jarman and Allen Ginsberg onto our video screens. We recently caught up with Richard King of the eminent Visionary to get the low down on the new endeavour.

With Visionary being around for quite a few years now acquiring both respect and success with its tireless video release in the independent market, wouldn't it just be easier to just expand the current catalogue to include more "indie" films thus using an established profile to create the attention required rather than starting with an unknown moniker?

"We have been working on Screen Edge for nearly two years now. Coming from what is predominantly the music industry we knew very little about how movie/video distribution operates and had to take a lot of advice. The first thing we realised was we had to separate the movies from music, as the markets are so different. Screen Edge as a moniker keeps the punk feel alive for Visionary customers at the same time as giving potential new customers an idea of where we are coming from.

"The Screen Edge 'badge' also increases the products racking potential for the high-street chainstores. Look at Redemption. We took note of their terrific success rate. Their packaging is unrivalled, yet the films are not of consistent quality, they have released some real crap. We took on board the benefits of using semi-generic packaging and decided to only offer high quality films at a nice price. We have some really cracking movies that deserve to be seen. By getting them noticed we can do some good for the independent movie industry, in particular the film makers themselves. We have to do everything we can to ensure everyone benefits."

The Independent domain sure could do with some support. Being so involved Richard, what do you think causes this lack of support in the UK, of underground film makers and the UK film industry in general? - Its beyond economics...

"Business men, pseudo snobs and lack of faith in the country's creativity. It's like so many other so called prestigious industries. White collar nepotism rules. I don't think it is wholly the BFI's fault. They are, after all, operating in more or less the same way as most white collar industries do in the UK. The ones holding the purse strings like to channel the money back to their purses as easily as possible. They ignore their duty to the general public, remaining conveniently ignorant of any real creative talent. Fear of the new is a big factor. Once a British film maker has a little success he is welcomed by the BFI with open arms and consequently disappears into obscurity."

So do you think organisations like the BFI, who publicly support the UK film industry, are actually doing enough for "unknown" film makers?

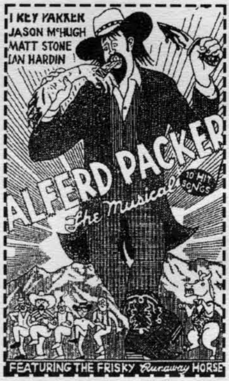
"In a word... NO. They ought to be making films that people want to see. If that is not happening, obviously things need to change. I mean if people want to buy toothpaste in plastic tubes the tube-factory chucks out the old machines and buys new... economic survival. This is exactly what the BFI needs to do. I'm sure they won't and I find that very encouraging. The independent sector is probably better off working under its own rules. Flexibility is the key to making low-budget features. The BFI bend very little."

Another organisation with a great influence in the film and video world is the British Board of Film Classification, so have Screen Edge had any problems with Mr Firman and his jolly banned of censors?

"A little but we worked it out. Unfortunately we're not in a position to argue. There is too much at stake, it's all well and good being against censorship, but it's not worth blowing a good project like this wasting time and money (both of which we have very little). Actually the BBFC are not quite so unapproachable as we were led to believe. James Firman calls us up now and talks movies. The main problem is they are so far behind schedule. Hey! Mr Firman when we get behind we work weekends and nights.

Censorship is essential though, isn't it!?

"It's problematic. I am a strong believer in the ability of individuals to censor themselves. Take that ability away and you create a potentially dangerous situation, both socially and governmentally. (see The Couch Report)"



The Screen Edge press release states the plan to highlight the genre "in need of a name" Why do you think the UK has such an apathetic attitude towards anything off-centre (not "arty" and not mainstream)?

"Our complete lack of culture. We no longer have an identity ourselves unless you count football hooligans and pervy politicians. It's the "high art" "low art" argument. In times when low "low art" is far more relevant to society it is simply commodityfied and sold off for as much profit and in as short a time as possible, then binned. Where as "high art" has become an outlet for nostalgic snobbery and lost all real meaning. This has created an attitude against art. I think things are changing. The government has seen to that. People have given up trusting them. There are rapidly increasing numbers of solid individuals emerging at street level and the public are beginning to take more notice of them than politicians. It's a very healthy 'Fuck you and the horse you rode in on' attitude, partly to do with the seventies punks approaching middle age and having some influence. Who knows in a few years other European countries may start to respect us."

Screen Edge is paramountly the brainchild of John Bentham the man also behind Connoisseur Video, a label which has mushroomed with its much welcomed exposure of world and arthouse films, will we be seeing his new baby creating an audience to take it to similar "mainstream" success?

"John has a knack of finding niches. He is always a little ahead of the pack. Unfortunately he has been squeezed out by bigger fish in the past. With Screen Edge we are the only ones with the guts to go for it. He's learned so much by bad experiences he'll hang on like a pit-bull to this baby. It has got to work. The timing is perfect. Hollywood is having kittens and the industry itself has become more interesting to the public than the films it produces. People are looking for something fresh. I truly believe they just want something new, something they can relate to. John is an excellent worker. He won't give up. He has a reputation for never taking "no" for an answer. If something doesn't work for him he either finds a way to make it or writes his own rules and works around it. Yes I think Screen Edge will be successful on many levels... as a business, a champion and a catalyst for a real, working indie film industry."

So Richard, how would you personally perceive this audience?

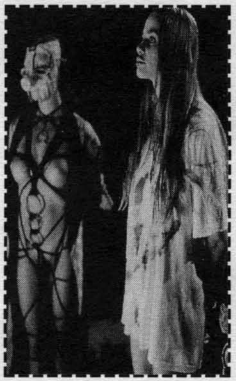
"On a couch, easy chair, lying on the floor, maybe with a bag of sweets some crisps and pop... probably drinking beer and smoking a couple of doobies. Mainly young or young minded. Bored with mainstream Hollywood "vacuum" movies. Intelligent, probably creative themselves. People who read magazines like this. Actually that's a difficult one, it's like asking "How do you perceive Visionary music buyers" and we honestly haven't a clue. "

And who's audience would you be in then..

"This varies from week to week. Moods. Happenings. I can get crazy about a film maker and want to watch everything he or she has made, even overdose and not watch a film for a month. I used to watch at least a dozen movies a week. It's probably half that now. Anyway there is no particular pecking order here:

Francis Coppola: Apocalypse Now, Rumble Fish.
Martin Scorsese: Taxi Driver, After Hours, Goodfellas.
David Lynch:Everything he's made
John Waters: Cry Baby, Pink Flamingos
Katherine Bigelow: Near Dark, The Hitcher (writer)
Lindsay Anderson: If, Hospital Britannia
Stanley Kubrick: Clockwork Orange
Quentin Tarrantino: Reservoir Dogs, Pulp Fiction
Oliver Stone: Salvador
Tim Hutton: Rivers Edge
John Landis: An American Werewolf In London, Animal House.
Ridley Scott: Blade Runner
David Cronenberg: Scanners, Dead Ringers, Naked Lunch etc.
Marco Ferreri: Tales Of Ordinary Madness
Wim Wenders: Paris Texas
George Romero: Zombies Trilogy
Sam Raimi: Evil Dead Trilogy
Coen Bros: Everything
Matthew Harrison: Spare Me
Jack Sholder: The Hidden
Alex Cox: Repo Man

I think I had better call a halt there it is too hard for me. I've missed out dozens."



Screen Edge officially hits the world on 25 September with the release of a diverse collection of films; "The Pope of Utah", "The Upstairs Neighbour" "The Frontline" and "Alfred Packer The Musical" (see Son of Celluloid) - contact the cutting edge of contemporary cinema at P.O. Box 30, Lytham St. Annes, FY8 1RL, England.

Nihon no Ongaku

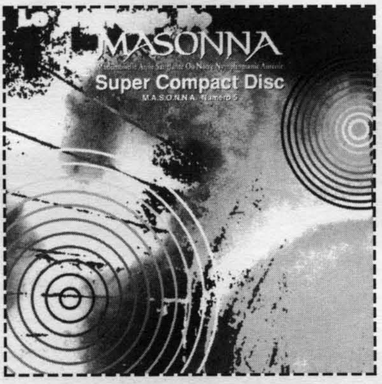
mason jones

This being the first instalment of this column, it's appropriate to use part as an introduction to the Japanese music scene. I was asked to write this about Japanese noise, which I will concentrate on; but I also intend to widen the scope in order to show that there's a great deal of interesting music being produced in Japan which isn't purely noise. It seems as though it's the noise coming out of Japan which is getting most of the press these days, while other equally-worthy endeavours labor on in the shadows.

I'll also take this opportunity to clarify my own personal definitions and the reasons behind them. Noise is just that: noise. Musical groups such as the Boredoms, Ruins and Zeni Geva are great, but they're not noise. They don't consider themselves noise (Null in fact objects to the term quite strenuously), and noise artists don't consider them noise. I will restrict the noise genre to those who are pure noise artists such as Merzbow, Hijokaidan, and Incapacitants.

Certainly there are those who straddle the line between noise and music, such as Violent Onsen Geisha and perhaps Contagious Orgasm. I don't mean to draw an absolute line, by any means. But I do grow tired of seeing every group out of Japan being labeled a "noise" group simply because they're a bit unusual and the writer has heard of the noise scene over there.

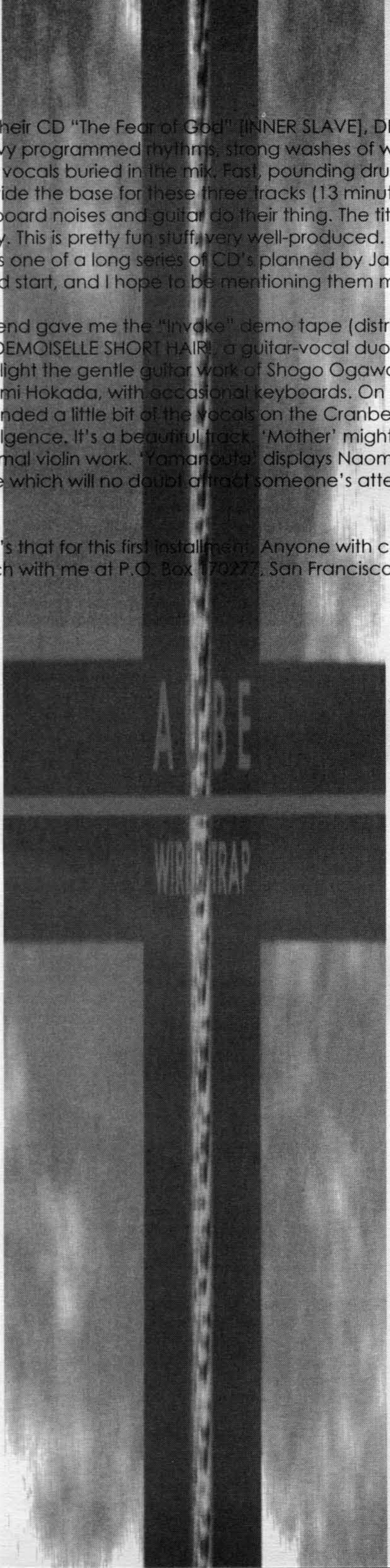
Okay, enough of the soapbox, and on to some recent offerings. One of the more infamous noisicians recently has been MASONNA, who is in the process of releasing at least a half-dozen new items during the rest of the year. His "Super Compact Disc" [ALCHEMY RECORDS] is one solid 33:33 track of ultra-intense high-speed processed screaming and feedback. After the first ten minutes or so, one starts to fall into a trance inspired by the constantly evolving textures of this noise release. No single sound ever lasts for more than a second or two before being manipulated or replaced; this is a masterpiece of editing by Maso Yamazaki. The CD is packaged with a beautiful fold-out full-color psychedelic miniposter (appropriate given Maso's love for psychedelicism). Keeping up his continual release of incredibly limited-edition special cassettes, Masonna has also recently made the "Filled with unquestionnable (sic) feelings" tape, a 60-minute noise excursion packaged in a small plastic bag. Both sides are the expected high-intensity; the B-side is different on every copy of the tape.



On "Ministry of Foolishness" [RRRecords PURE series], the INCAPACITANTS continue their legacy of enormously dense, heavy sounds. As with all of the Pure series of CD's, the artwork is nonexistent: the CD is inside a plain black & white cardboard sleeve. But for this budget series, the sounds are what matter, of course: Three tracks, 73 minutes of claustrophobic electronic storms created by the infamous duo of T. Mikawa and Fumio Kosakai. Recently at live shows the pair have been using pocket theremins, but it's of course hard to tell what the sources are from the sounds alone due to the depth of the processing involved. There is always voice, which can be distinguished given enough attention, but overall the Incapacitants sound is that of utter chaos, thick enough to choke you. This is one of their best.

Rapidly growing infamous in the noise underground due to his seemingly inexhaustible energy is Akifumi Nakajima, mastermind behind the project AUBE and head of the infamous cassette label G.R.O.S.S., renowned for the gorgeous design and packaging of the releases. He has quite a few recent Aube releases, and more up his sleeve yet to come. One of the latest is the CD "Wired Trap" [SELF ABUSE RECORDS] a 77-minute exploration of the sounds that can be generated from a heavy steel wire made by a friend. The five tracks each target a particular type of noise, which is then reprocessed into a variety of harsh drones. Aube's working method is always that of selecting a particular sound source (which has included water, flourescent tubes, and other artists' recordings), and creating a new soundscape through diligent reprocessing. The sounds on "Wired Trap" range from stressful textures to harsh drones, a fine collection.

Drummer-around-town TATSUYA YOSHIDA will be familiar to many as the founder of the Ruins. Perhaps less-recognized is his participation from time to time with an astounding number of other groups over the years. Here to correct that is the "Devil from the East" CD [BLOODY BUTTERFLY], a 17-track career retrospective. The selections range from live recordings to documentation of his work with bands like Zeni Geva, YBO2, Dissecting Table, The Gerogerigegege, Vasilisk, High Rise, Torture Garden, and more. As a bonus, this CD serves as a good introduction to all of these bands. The styles involved veer from punk to jazz, from industrial pounding to tribal drumming, from rock to grindcore. An amazing



document of a phenomenal drummer.

On their CD "The Fear of God" [INNER SLAVE], DEF.MASTER get into a style a bit like Sonic Violence, perhaps: heavy programmed rhythms, strong washes of white noise, grindcore style guitar, and vocals buried in the mix. Fast, pounding drums and sequenced keyboards provide the base for these three tracks (13 minutes total on the CD), while keyboard noises and guitar do their thing. The title track is fast enough to cause injury. This is pretty fun stuff, very well-produced. Inner Slave, in Switzerland, says this is one of a long series of CD's planned by Japanese artists. They're off to a good start, and I hope to be mentioning them more in the future.

DEVIL FROM THE EAST
A DECADE OF YOSHIDA TATSUYA

A friend gave me the "Invoke" demo tape (distributed by GYUUNE CASSETTES) by MADEMOISELLE SHORT HAIR!, a guitar-vocal duo from Osaka. These five songs highlight the gentle guitar work of Shogo Ogawa and the crystalline singing of Naomi Hokada, with occasional keyboards. On the first track, 'Bridge' I'm reminded a little bit of the vocals on the Cranberries' releases, without the indulgence. It's a beautiful track. 'Mother' might be my favorite piece, with some particularly great singing and minimal violin work. 'Yamanouta' displays Naomi's vocal abilities in a very strange dirgy piece. A very interesting tape which will no doubt attract someone's attention.

That's that for this first installment. Anyone with comments, information, and the like should feel free to get in touch with me at P.O. Box 170277, San Francisco, CA 94117-0277 U.S.A.

[Inner Slave Records, P.O. Box 3244, 1400 Yverdon, Switzerland]
[Bloody Butterfly, Haitsu-Kawakam-202, 6-28-15 Nagasaki, Toshimaku, Tokyo, Japan]
[Self Abuse Records, 13 Academy St, Concord, NH 03301, USA]
[Pure/RRRecords, 151 Paige St, Lowell, MA 01852, USA]
[Alchemy Records, 1-15-9-507, Nishi-shinsaibashi, Chuoh-ku, Osaka 542, Japan]
[Gyuune Cassettes, c/o Keizo Suhara, 1-3-18 Shotenshita, Nishinari-ku, Osaka 557, Japan]

Japanese Music Top Ten

1. SHIZUKA Heavenly Persona CD [PSF]
2. NULL Ultimate Material III CD [Manifold]
3. TATSUYA YOSHIDA Drums, Voices, Keyboards & Guitar CD [Magaibutsu]
4. RUINS-HATOBA Show VIDEO [Magaibutsu]
5. VAJRA Tusgaru CD [PSF]
6. AUBE Wired Trap CD [Self-Abuse]
7. MASONNA Super Compact Disc CD [Alchemy]
8. INCAPACITANTS Ministry Of Foolishness CD [Pure/RRRecords]
9. MERZBOW Electro-Knots 7" [Cold

Profiling the American Independent Cyber Label Scene

chase

PIG
THE CONFLICT CONTINUES
KMFDM

Although Europe has been the breeding ground for most of the old school cyber and noise labels, the U.S. is finally rising to the challenge. When **WAX TRAX!** emerged in the early '80's, it negated the need for any other synthcore merchants, but as their roster expanded beyond the digital domain, a new ballot was cast and a new government rose to power. This new regime consists of the following stables...

CLEOPATRA made the biggest dent in the domestic scene with their bulk approach to pirating the market. Rather than a release or two a month, they opted for at least ten, with no slow down in sight. Even though their cyberside is bloated with acts licensed primarily from Zoth Ommog, they've managed to also enlist some domestic talent like Kill Switch...Klick, Penal Colony, Electric Hellfire Club, Spahn Ranch, and Noisebox. [Cleopatra 8726 S. Sepulveda, Ste. D-82 / LA, CA 90045]

What's a German label like **C.O.P. INTERNATIONAL** doing in a profile on American labels? I think if you look at their roster and take into account their U.S. office, you'll find that they're more of a star spangled banner organization than a German thing. Among their heavy hitters are Battery, Pain Emission, Deathline Int'l, Of Skin and Saliva, Under the Noise and three competent compilations. Battery calls attention to themselves by serving up a harsh electrodance framework with a melodic frontwoman, while Pain Emission has slowly gravitated from the Puppy school to sinister Pink Floyd-inspired synthrock constructions. [Cop Int'l. USA: 981 Aileen st. / Oakland, CA 94608 / Germany: Munzenburgstr.3 / 61 440 Oberursel]

FIFTH COLVMN began as a spring board for Chemlab, but has slowly taken on a whole slew of new signings. Following in the guitar-&-synth style of Chemlab is Haloblack and the impressive Acumen, while other additions aren't as guitar motivated, such as the Mind/Body compilation, P.O.D. and the licensing of Max M. Although this label has been creeping along, their upcoming release schedule looks like a page out of Cleopatra's marketing book. Picking up everyone from Black Lung (Snog's side project), Dessau (a guitar-&-cyber stomper with Paul "Ministry" Barker's additional bass playing), early recordings of Luc Van Acker's, and the Cyber-Tec Project with one of 242's vocalists, Fifth Colvmn proves they got an ear for quality and quantity. [Fifth Colvmn PO Box 787 / Washington, D.C. / 20044]

After entering the electronic arena with Xorcist, **21ST CIRCUITRY** has exhibited staying power by putting out such tasty treats as Hate Dept., Gracious Shades, two Death Rave compilations, and now licensing Offbeat's Steril. With the exception of the ominous Omen-inspired programming of Xorcist and the two hard alternative techno compilations, 21st Circuitry seems geared towards the guitar-slinging compucore style. [21st Circuitry PO Box 170100 / SF, CA 94117]

Fresh on your programmable plate is **DECIBEL**, a label that sports three bands who fully engage in sequencer warfare. Alien Faktor follows the lead set by FLA, while Oneroid Psychosis should please fans of the harsher darkwave movement, and Morpheus Sister is a perfect opening act for a Die Krupps concert. [Decibel 17125C W. Bluemound Rd. #122 / Milwaukee, WI 53008-0949]

FURNACE may have originated before Decibel, but it looks like they're both around the same stage. The synth-&-snarling dancefloor abusing Abstinence spearheaded the label, and was complemented by the Industrial Heads and the Hellscape compilation. Pounce Int'l is among their latest recruits. [Furnace 340 Bryant st. Top floor/East Wing SF CA 94107]

Two labels that are bringing in the goods on a primarily licensing level are **METROPOLIS** and **VAN RICHTER**. Metropolis has licensed such offerings as Mentallo & The Fixer, Numb, Project Pitchfork and now Swamp Terrorists, while Van Richter has brought over Testify, The Fair Sex, Plastic Noise Experience and Sielwolf. One of these labels has gotten a lot of negative press and the other hasn't, so if you're going to license a product to the U.S., ask around first. [Metropolis PO Box 54307 / Philadelphia, PA 19105, Van Richter PO Box 13321 / La Jolla, CA 92039-3321]

You can read about **RE-CONSTRICTION** in their feature.

Oh yeah, in regards to **WAX TRAX!**, they're still doing relevant releases by KMFDM, Die Warzau and Sister Machine Gun. [Wax Trax! 1657 N. Damen Ave. / Chicago, IL 60647]

If I'm still part of the staff when next issue rolls around, I'm going to tackle the world of self-released CD's... so let T.E.Q. know what you think about my contributions.

NON

MIGHT!

"CHRISTS MAY COME, AND CHRISTS MAY GO...
BUT CAESAR LIVES FOREVER"
Ragnar Redbeard

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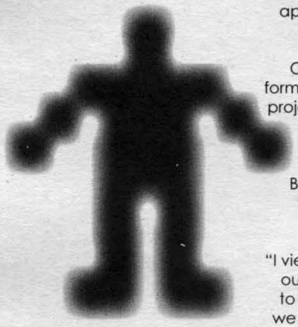
"I hope somebody is out there because we're fucked if we're alone"

S.E.T.I.

Pass the Custard Creams...

h. marcuse



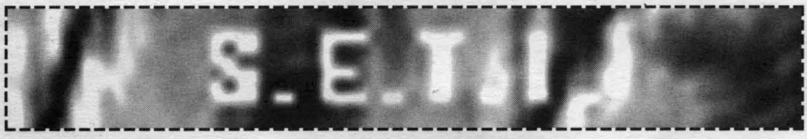
The planet is full of individuals working towards one goal or another. In the musical world, some are rather more forceful at making their point be heard. A few, those who are really studious in the approach are far less assuming, they rely purely on the sounds they're creating to do the work. No overblown promotional tactics, just the end results of creative minds.

One such mind is Andrew Lagowski. No stranger to these pages, he's involved in just about every form of new electronica we cover, and even some we haven't yet. S.E.T.I. is possibly his most intense project. Wholly derived from sound extraction and manipulation, his latest "Knowledge" excursion is full of grey matter genius. Master of intelligent techno and now, the genius inventor looks to the skies.

Be prepared, S.E.T.I. is made with purpose. The listener must use his own brain, first to observe and then to question all that is sacred around them. As they say, "The Truth Is Out There" but it's sure been buried beyond all recognition...

"I view S.E.T.I. as fulfilling many purposes," explains Andrew, "to explore the technological aspects of our existence in audible terms, to spark off an interest in people in the original S.E.T.I. protocol, and to make people think about their position as individuals and groups on this planet, and to see how we are being watched, not necessarily from outer space, but from our own planet. It can be taken in many ways...". And of course we all should be well aware of the control devices used on ALL people. The State, Government, Big Business call it whatever, it IS controlling us.

If S.E.T.I. explores technological aspects of life where does it slot into your other projects? "S.E.T.I. is apart from Lagowski in that the latter is more entertainment(?) oriented; for home or club use, and Legion explores a darker side than either of the other two projects." It's interesting to hear Andrew define Legion as the 'darker side' as surely there's nothing more dark than the forces of control which S.E.T.I. highlights?



What inspires S.E.T.I.? Little green monsters... "I think most of my inspiration for S.E.T.I. soundtracks comes from that feeling you get when you look into a black night sky and see billions of stars and satellites and think to yourself "Fuck, some of those stars aren't there anymore and I'm seeing light that's been travelling for millions of years. Some of those satellites might not be from this planet. I hope somebody is out there because we're fucked if we're alone." Our own denial of 'extra-terrestrials' and unwillingness to explore new ideas means we are fucked. Same applies to music too. Andrew is still positive. "I'm doing this stuff to get people inspired into investigating wider issues for themselves and hopefully they'll enjoy my soundtracks too." I guess with the popularity of an artist like Scanner he may still have a chance to get the message through. But Andrew views no similarity. "Scanner is a world apart from my way of working and the way we see ourselves. I'm looking at us here from a much larger perspective, whereas Scanner deals with us as a group of voyeuristic low-lives. I've heard stories about his early albums, but I won't add to them."

The message does seem to be getting through in that the mainstream press are picking up on this latest album. But they don't seem to be getting the point. Is that frustrating? "I suggest they carry on listening to my stuff, maybe in a different environment and that they don't play it straight after some piano and 909 house bollocks. Like Legion, this stuff is best utilised in the dark at moderately high volume. My opinion of these people hasn't changed really; they'll always be like that, so there's no point me being upset about it. I know my stuff has merit and if I'm happy with it, then it's o.k." How do you see the music evolving? "New machines have been added and old ones removed to give a much denser, three-dimensional sound. I want the listener to experience my stuff and visualise new worlds in their mind's eye; places as yet unvisited."

Some of the places which Andrew is talking about have been viewed on programmes such as "X-Files" Typically very American gloss, but the series does cover the unmentionable. Is it a programme you can identify? "X-Files is good because, as you say, it opens people up to subjects that they may never have been previously aware of. Of the episodes I've seen, all were based on true events which I've read about and which are common knowledge to those already doing research in these areas. Books such as Timothy Good's 'Above Top Secret' or Greenwood's 'Clear Intent' contain events from the X-Files programme." But couldn't its commercialised nature harm its intended serious side? "Unfortunately, the follow-up to the programme, in the form of fanzines and paraphernalia is starting to trivialise things to a degree where people won't take them at all seriously." I agree, sadly.

As more people are becoming aware of Andrew's work on a global scale, I wonder if he's set his sights even further afield? With the on-line address now set-up, what would he say to a mind from beyond this galaxy who's tapped into his Apple Mac? "Come over for tea and let's discuss the possibility of some space travel."

"The techno/punk dichotomy reminds me of the classical vs. romantic distinction"

ARTHUR LOVES PLASTIC

Girl In The Fast Lane

barbara ann rice

The name Arthur Loves Plastic may make more sense when you find out that the cat of this one-woman project loves to play with plastic grocery bags. Arthur's mistress is Bev Stanton, who loves to play with electronic instruments in her basement, a birthing room for bubbly, infectious house-beat music with shadowy overtones. I dare you not to dance to it.

Unlike most musicians who have worked in electronic-based music, Stanton began her musical apprenticeship playing in not-quite-in-style new wave guitar bands. Nonetheless, Stanton and her partner, John Sudnik, mapped out an impressive, if not overwhelmingly successful career in Florida and North Carolina and opened up for the Replacements and the Dead Milkmen.

Bev and John then moved north to Maryland in 1991, outside of Washington, DC, where they formed Then There Were None. Bev programmed the keyboard and drum machines in addition to playing bass guitar for TTWN. "Because we had a midi arsenal we were being dumped in with bands like Depeche Mode, even though we sounded nothing like them" Stanton lamented. Eventually Bev and John decided to pare down their sound and reconfigure TTWN as a sparse ensemble which features neither drum machine nor keyboards. Bev would not allow her programming skills to go to waste. She produced a 6-song tape "Sperm Warfare" in late 1994, under the Arthur Loves Plastic moniker. Stanton elaborated "Sperm Warfare" was a toungue-in-cheek commentary on "male aggression, the whole testosterone thing"

She admitted that it is "hard doing things on your own." However, that perseverance paid off. "It's ironic," she commented "John and I have been doing music for nine years. When I sent out "Sperm" which took less time and money to put out, I got a much better response than with any previous mailings. For instance, instead of a form letter, Instinct sent me handwritten comments."

Bev is enthusiastic about the techno field. "I've always been fascinated by techno. It's the only music I can listen to these days and hear something new." She also expounded on the lo-fi virtues of techno. "With sampling we are no longer slaves to sound modules."

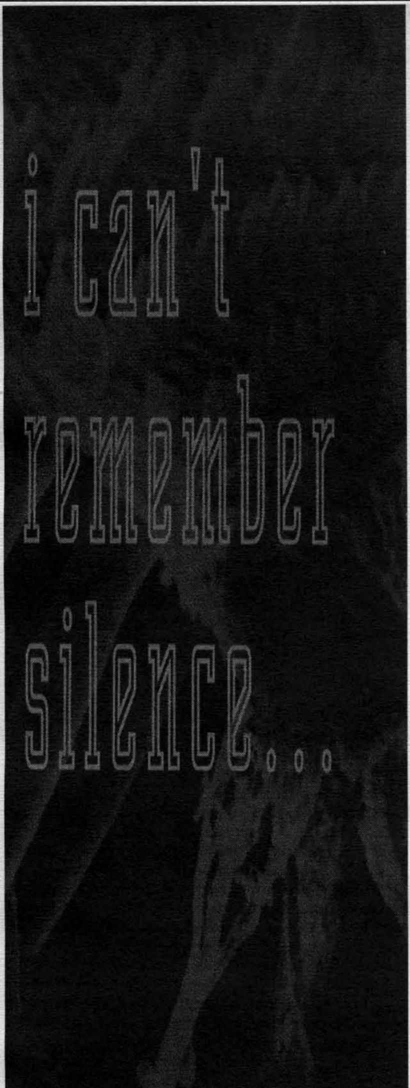
There are other advantages to techno. "Labels are willing to put it out because most of it is self-produced. Artists don't need tour support or an enormous recording budget."

Bev is one of the few musicians aside from Moby and Linda LeSabre of Thrill Kill Kult, who have gone from a guitar-based "Alternative" format to techno. Are there any similarities between techno and punk?

"There probably is the same DIY spirit but a different mentality. Techno is much better produced. With techno you have to be more disciplined... It is all about attention to detail.

"The techno/punk dichotomy reminds me of the classical vs. romantic distinction. I prefer the more restrained passion of classical music. I admire the raw energy of punk, but to me, techno can achieve the same level of intensity in a more cerebral fashion."

She looks forward to TEQ MUSIC?'s release of the full-length "Zero State." "My material is hybrid. You can see where the influences are, but I try to do my own thing with them. I listen to everything from hip-hop to industrial. I'm glad to be on a British label, because many of the labels over here, with the exception of some of the independents, seem too preoccupied with the bottom line, and afraid to take chances."



> "If a band really wants to get signed to Re-Constriction, I suggest sending me some boxes of imported chocolate."

RE-CONSTRICTION

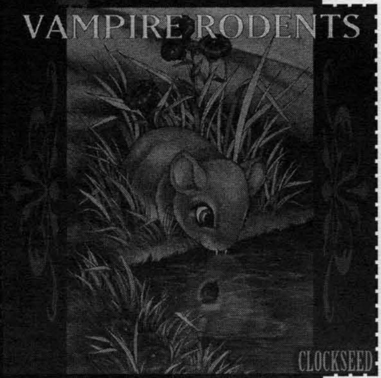
'The Slum-Lord Is God!'

peter leafson

While torture-tech labels have been prevalent in Europe, from Machinery to Zoth Ommog to KK, the U.S. has had a lot less contenders until recently. The first of these to pop up after Wax Trax!' descent from the spotlight was the Cargo-funded Re-Constriction label, who've been a guiding light for the new wave of American electronic acts.

In order to learn more about this San Diego-based anomaly, I interviewed Chase, Re-Constriction's self-dubbed 'label slumlord'
A man who has clear objectives for the continuation of a strong scene in the States. A workaholic, he knows what he likes too! But, how did it all begin? "Back in 1990, I had been doing a synthcore radio show called Fantasia Aftermath, as well as DJing at the local techno-stomp clubs. While at the station, I hooked up with Cargo Records to help them promote KK Records in the States (Cargo had licensed KK). Because KK wasn't doing as well as both labels had hoped, I suggested starting a domestic 'industrial'-dance label. Although Cargo owns Re-Constriction, I have my own compilation-oriented label called If It Moves.

"Initially I wanted to exploit a lot of the domestic electronic talent by releasing their music and investing the profit into my brothel and drug operations." Following in the good old American tradition, no doubt! "But then another idea hit me. My new gameplan was to adhere closely to guitar-oriented electronic music, especially bands who knew how to keep both elements balanced in the mix... I didn't want any bands like the latter-day Ministry who harnessed electronics in a death metal fashion. My first two signings - Diatribe and 16 Volt - reflected my vision. I feel a label must have a distinct sound in order to succeed. This way consumers can look for your logo and know what to expect. Zoth Ommog is a perfect example - X Marks the Pedwalk, Leæther Strip, and Psychopomps all fit together. Without having a label-oriented sound, consumers don't know what to expect from your bands and will consequently be too wary to invest in them. This is why Wax Trax fans have become so sceptical. They don't know if the next release is going to be a cyber project like Front 242 or a rock band like Braindead Sound Machine, Wreck or God's Acre. However, I also believe that if a label can offer consistency and good taste, they can also slip in a fringe sounding release. Although a lot of people questioned Zoth's decision to release the hip hop-oriented Headcrash, I thought it was an excellent disc. This illustrates my point about taste."



This view of keeping a distinct sound must surely restrict originality within a band's style? How do you guard against new signings merely sounding like the last ones? "To catch my attention, a band must be doing what's already out there, but doing it better, or doing something completely different. In most cases, I've selected bands who have improved upon the guitar/synth style, but occasionally I'll find an innovator like Vampire Rodents. I do require all of my signings to have a defining characteristic - whether it be how they play guitar, sing or sample - so they can survive the comparison gauntlet. If a band really wants to get signed to Re-Constriction, I suggest sending me some boxes of imported chocolate." Belgium or Swiss? British is crap...

Chase is well known both in the States and Europe for non-stop promotion of his, and other artists working within what you might call the U.S. Industrial scene. Is that just belief in the scene itself or just the artists he likes? "No matter how good a label's promotion is, a corpse with a skunk and a platter of rotten vegetables crammed in its mouth will still stink." I guess it is a case of only the material he likes then! "I believe in my roster, but I also invest a lot of time and energy into promotion." The promotion doesn't only stop at hassling magazines and labels, he also finds the time to write himself (witness yourself in MFTEQ)... "I love writing columns, but reviews can get boring. I mean, how many different ways can a writer describe a band with harsh vocals and electronic beats without relying on comparisons?" That is a problem we all suffer from, but we persevere... "The benefits of writing are free promotional CD's, the fulfillment of helping friends and obscure bands get publicity, and being able to keep my writing from getting stale. After all, I would rather be writing books than running a label." Mad fool! "This is why I'm having my Industrial label encyclopedia called the "Gutter-Tech Grimoire" published by Cleopatra."

For all his hard work in development and promotion, surprisingly he doesn't accept there's many innovative U.S. labels in his own genre... "Seeing as how most of the U.S. cyber labels churn out NIN inspired music, I don't think there are any innovative labels (mine included) in the dance field, but there are a handful of innovative bands. My two favourites are Babyland and Vampire Rodents." Definitely two of the weirdest of the bunch with their non-conformist approach. I myself favour Babyland's brutality but find the humour of the Rodents satisfyingly original. Have these bands and the label itself been received well outside the U.S.? "We do a lot of our exporting to Europe, but I would like to ship more. As far as press goes, my guitar-heavy bands like 16 Volt and Killing Floor have received mixed reviews. I think it's funny that a lot of European electro-purists are being forced to appreciate the guitar now that all of their idols, like Front 242, Frontline Assembly, and Nitzer Ebb have succumbed to the temptation. Unfortunately, these trend setting bands are scoffed at for jumping on the bandwagon created by bands they influenced." The vicious circle, which the press have no appreciation of, or are unwilling to accept. More likely to be the latter.

With cheque-book at the ready, which labels in Europe would you like to tempt bands from? "I think Machinery, Offbeat, Zoth Ommog, Audioglobe and KK have all put out releases that could be viable in the U.S. with the right promotion. Unlike Germany, however, the U.S. is extremely spread out, so it's hard to infiltrate the cybercore market unless you've been working at it for awhile." Notice no English labels in that bunch. The UK hasn't exactly embraced cyber with open arms, though if you are in the know, there is still a strong underground appreciation which the press, of course, refuse to accept once more.

The opposite can be said of techno, which is now filtering across to the States in large doses. I wondered if Chase saw this as a threat to the Industrial market at all? "Techno already did its damage when the rave trend came. It essentially got all the rivet heads dancing to a faster tempo oriented style, so it was hard to go back to the slower BPM stomp they were accustomed to. Now that the rave trend has passed, I don't think any other techno hybrid can make cyberpunk obsolete. Besides, even with the popularity of techno in the U.S. clubs, it has yet to even touch the radio arena - nobody is ever going to sit through ten minutes of a looped beat with the occasional sample of *"Al Jourgensen is dead."* Radio stations over here rely on short songs with guitar hooks and emotive vocals which I doubt is going to change anytime soon." No techno-offshoots for Re-constriction then!

What is new..? "I'm working on a film that's part of the Star Wars trilogy... It deals with scenes edited out of the original, like when Darth Vader and a bunch of Stormtroopers gang rape Yoda. In the world of Re-Constriction, the only anticipated thing is the sequel to "Shut Up Kitty" It's called "Nod's Tacklebox o' Fun" and it's in the works. I had briefly considered doing an industrial version of the Grease soundtrack, but I was severely beaten by my friends, so I passed on that concept." Could've worked, but I think Saturday Night Fever would have had those cyber-hips pumping better.

Ending I ask Chase for a recommended listing of material for those who still refuse to even attempt to give his type-material a listen... "I can, but I won't. Instead, I'll give you a listing of my favourite releases: Babyland's "A Total Let-Down" Acumen's "Transmissions From Eville" Vampire Rodents' "Clockseed" Pig's "Praise the Lard" Swamp Terrorists' "Grow-Speed-Injection" Chris Connelly-era Fini Tribe, pre-"Ebbhead" Nitzer Ebb... There are actually very few full CD's that I like... I usually only find one or two tracks from any particular disc worth putting on a compilation tape."

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The Couch Report
Messages from the Fat Lad.

richard j. king

A CENSORTIVE ISSUE

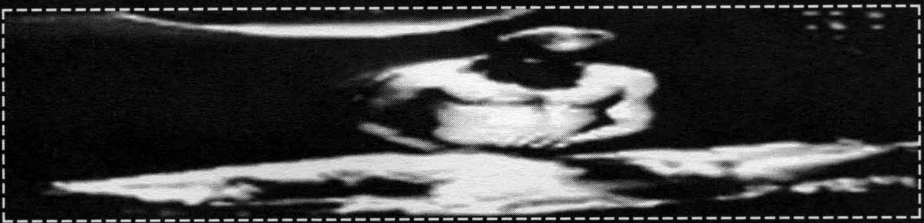
So there am I at the Screen Edge video label launch party. I spot this old gravity-rounded bloke in a shabby navy blue jacket and over washed grey trousers. He's carrying a smart shoulder bag and is swanning around like he owns the place. It's early doors yet. There are only a dozen or so guests in the place. No one speaks to him. Eventually someone introduces the bloke to John Bentham, Managing Director of Screen Edge (a man with a passion for marketing maverick creativity, and my boss; but don't expect a sales pitch to follow).

There weren't even any niceties. The bloke was a journo from the Daily Telegraph he was in a state of mild outrage. At first I thought it was because he had been snubbed. No such foundation for his anger. He began to challenge John. What the hell did he think he was doing releasing all this pornographic filth onto the market. John was gobsmacked. What pornography? The man had not even seen the films. Very few people have, except the BBFC with whom we are working very closely to make this all work. What will David Alton make of it all? Oh dear he seems to be a supporter of the witchfinder general. He did not put pen to paper or make any attempt to listen. The films were filth and the more we denied it the more guilty we were. And there my friends are two of the major problems with this increasingly regressive country of ours.

The National Press and The Censor. Inseparable bedfellows.

There is a war being raged. The Press versus TV, Video and the Movie Business. The battles are constantly being won by the all powerful Fleet Street army; but these are victories in vain. They are fighting against creativity and truth. The Press, of course, take on the cunning guise of truth. But any attempt by the audio visual brigade to reveal this meets a frosty reception. The general public do not like being told they are fools. People find it hard to own up to being conned even if it is for the best. Our pride is such that it induces denial and the lies become accepted as truth. It is less painful on the ego.

The Press you see have this subliminal weapon, the all encompassing myth that if it is written in the papers it must be the truth. This is their strength. It is what gives them so much power. The written word is to be revered. The Press enjoy putting this power to the test, doing so with almost pathological regularity, often at the cost of real moral issues. In particular with their constant assault on film and more especially home video (the root of all today's evil).



Let's face it, portraying evil as evil in a realistic manner is not in itself an evil act; it is merely a portrayal. Claiming otherwise (as the tabloids so often do) is socially irresponsible and misleading to the extreme. Moral policing in any form is in itself immoral. Morals are instinctive within the majority of the population. Watching a fictionalised portrayal of immorality is not an immoral act it is informative, it enlightens and educates us, quite often about ourselves, thus keeping our behaviour in check.

The corporate bodies behind moral policing are creating a front for their own immorality. Making money by selling untruths to the public, flexing their muscles in full page spreads claiming that Chucky the killer doll was incitement to infanticide. They are a very expensive tool that the governing bodies get to use for free. This kind of control is by definition immoral. It is an act of violence, all be it bureaucratic violence, against the British man and woman on the street.

Third world dictatorships rule by the threat of slaughter. The population of these countries are, on the whole non-educated. Fear of pain or death is universally understood. Monetary penalties are useless in poverty stricken nations. But I would argue that this approach is, in essence, no different to our own governments form of oppression. There is a lot to be said for the belief that the only reason we never had slaves in Britain was because we had so much cheap labour already. We have been as systematically cruel to our own as any modern day dictatorship. Sorry I'll rephrase that slightly. They have been as systematically cruel to their own as any modern day dictatorship. And it is still going on. They simply employ different devices.

The point I'm trying to make is - and I'm sure I speak for millions out there - it really pisses me off when they say I can't do what I want to do in the privacy of my own home, especially when it's harmless fun. It makes me feel patronised and ridiculed. And that's the crux of the whole issue. What do they actually achieve by it all. If they say I can't do it, and I can't see a reason why not, I'm going to do it double. If they say I can't watch Boy Meets Girl, Driller Killer, The Exorcist or Transgression I'm going to find bootleg copies and watch them. I'm going to have friends round to watch them. Lend the tapes to as many people as I can so they can watch them. And nine times out of ten we'll all think "What the Hell is all the fuss about?"

The problem is, these self appointed protectors of our morality are not actually "real people". They do not spend all year scraping together the cash for a two week holiday abroad; they do not feel the worse effects of the huge bureaucratic nut being tightened week after week; they don't witness the pub brawls, the violence on the streets; their children aren't targeted by the pervy in the park. They answer to no-one; least of all those they allegedly serve. They place unbelievable pressure on Joe Public's shoulders and tell us we should be able to cope "because we have to". And if we don't, we are "bad people". Stiff upper lip and all that. But they don't have to cope.

So when they tell us we can't watch a fucking horror film for a bit of entertainment - for pure escapism - to project our pent up anger onto the victims within the movie - for whatever reason we want to watch it, we should ask the question "Who the fuck do you think you are Mr High and Bloody Mighty". We should never, never plead. Never ask them "Gives us a break" because, by God, they will break you.

We are "bad people" for wanting to watch the stuff in the first place. The papers say we are bad for enjoying Natural Born Killers or Reservoir Dogs. And it is so sad how many people fall for this bullshit propaganda. To the extent that when they watch their bootleg copy of NBK or some dodgy 15th generation copy of In Bed with Traci Lords and Eleven Men they are conditioned to react in only two ways - they can feel guilt and self disgust for even pressing 'play', switch off immediately and pass the tape onto the relevant authorities naming the source of such filth ("good people") or they can get excited by what they see on the screen ("bad people"). The smart money would certainly go on the latter being the most common reaction, because it is the most natural. The moral police would argue that this is unnatural behaviour and, what is more, it is, socially, very dangerous. They are saying that our natural desire for thrills is the basis for immorality. Yet, they can watch these things and remain emotionally and morally unaffected. They are the chosen ones.

Three things are inextricable from nature: sex, violence and death. Without them the human race and all other forms of life would not exist. The problem in portraying these things on the screen arise from the perception of what is being shown. Not our own perception; the censors perception of our perception. They perceive the worst possible scenarios and base their criteria around that.

Lets have a go at getting into a censors head:

'Harry gets pissed, picks up a copy of "I Spit on Your Grave", wakes the kids up to watch it with him. The kids get disturbed along with

Harry and the ensuing domestic carnage spills into the streets creating nationwide shock-waves.'

Because Harry wants to watch a graphic horror movie he is considered, by the censor, to be of somewhat low intelligence and therefore potentially dangerous. The censor doesn't take on board that Harry actually understands that what he is watching is only a movie, and surprise surprise Harry didn't even buy the movie himself, he was leant it by his youngest son who bought it at a car boot sale; and surprise sur-bloody-prise the kid actually understands it is only a movie as well.

We live in increasingly violent and disturbing times. The nut has been screwed far too tight for far too long. The thread is beginning to strip. The blame for this cannot be laid solely at the feet of violent and pornographic movies. The problem is too complex. If it was that simple, taking into consideration how many people watch bootleg "Video Nasties" and hardcore pornography on a regular basis, the situation would be a thousand times worse. Films reflect society and its tastes. Not vice versa. Violent times breed violent artists, be they painters, writers, musicians or film-makers.

If you believe the censor and agree that video has such a strong influence on society then you must also believe that a new Busby Berkley could be the answer to social unrest. Wake up and smell the shit.

Back at the launch party, John and I were still baffled the Telegraph reporter's reaction to Screen Edge. He could only have based his assessment on the cover artwork. One, "Spare Me", a film about bowling has a picture of a pretty girl in a black lacy bra type top, she is smiling sweetly. It's a good image it is eye catching; the images were picked very carefully. If that upset him, I can only surmise that he gets off on the lingerie section of his wife's Gratton's catalogue. He also mentioned the woman strapped to a chair on the cover of "Transgression". She is pictured dressed in a prison issue smock, strapped to the electric chair awaiting execution for the murder of three men. Now this guy is writing for the highly respected Telegraph, and if he is confusing execution with perversion, I ask you all, have we got a problem on our hands or what????

Until the next time something pisses me off.

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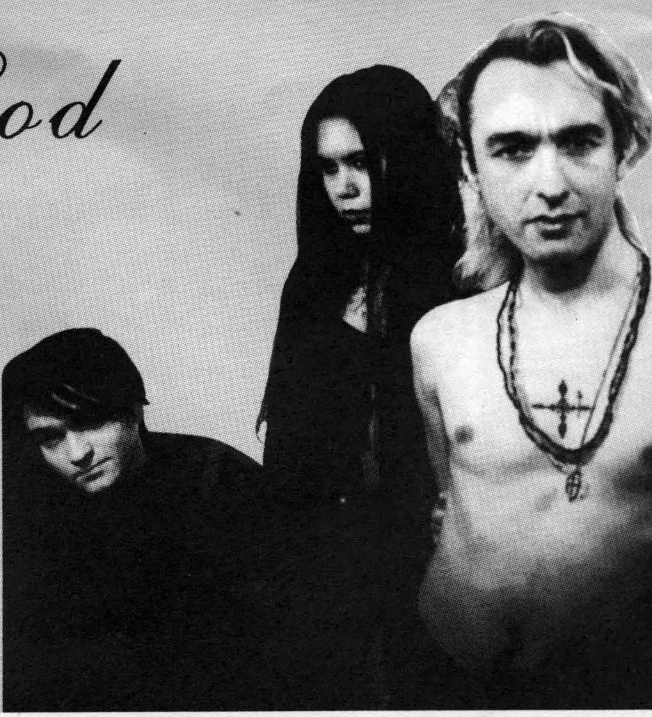


"We play with attraction and repulsion, against taboos and intolerance"

'Mechanical Soul Mates'

deadhead

DIE FORM

Originating way back in the early Eighties, Philiipe Fichot's Die Form project overtly brought the issue of sex into music. The use of extreme graphics, often using his partner Eliane in the role of agent provocateur, brings forth all the images of inspiration from the likes of De Sade, Lautreamont and Bataille. The music itself falls onto many levels, both signalling commercial electronic attitudes and soundtrack material, the latter of course being perfect for those sado-masochistic tendencies. But, it's the openness of Die Form which I find most appealing. No other band has dealt with, what the general public would regard as perverted issues so well, certainly none using electro-pop material to convey their personal thoughts and expressions.

Knowing that the musical side of Die Form isn't actually influenced by any other music, excepting the odd Coil track and some classical music, I wanted to get to the crux of what makes the band perform, they definitely don't fit into any current trends, and for that matter never have done. Philippe is here to let us into the heart of the band.

"Die Form is the theater of multi-forms and multi-media emotions; so the music/images evolve with our life, our sensibility, our passions, beyond the reason... We are not so influenced by scenes, because we are living isolated in the country without contacts, except during performances/tours. Most of our creations are introspective constructions, very intimate, not motivated by the fashions..." This fact is abundantly clear, as although the band grew from the days when real electronic industrial roots were firmly being planted, they could never be categorised along with the Nurse With Wounds, Test Departments, nor the Portion Control's of the world.

Die Form is more than music and Philippe points out, "The sound and the image are total complements (music, noises, photographies, films, performances...). We work with extreme emotions like sexuality and death, as powerful inspiration. These are personal incursions, but as well matter of next communication/exchange with our public..." And not feeling disadvantaged by allowing himself not to be hooked up with any scene, he's not chained to providing one type of stimulus. "By chance, or intuitively, we create exactly as we love... No compromise!"

Surely the explicit nature of the visual side must hinder their audience? We all know how hard it is to explore new ideas in these times of severe censorship. "In all new projects, we try to find and express more beauty and more purity; initiatory exploration in the depths of our degenerate soul, up to ecstatic dizziness, on the boundary of interdicts and madness. We play with attraction and repulsion, against taboos and intolerance. Inaccessible and never-ending quest of perfection..." But, pictures of bodily perfection must surely get in the way of mainstream exposure? "Certainly. But freedom and integrity are more important than show-business sometimes..."

After about twelve releases (and that doesn't include cassettes) Die Form signed to Hyperium, a label clearly with more power to get their output to a much wider audience. Have they tried to change your attitudes in any way, and have they actually helped you become more successful? "With Hyperium/Hypnobeat, we have the possibilities to work freely on all our projects and the assurance that all will come out in good conditions (except for the Elektrode CD, on which many design problems have damaged the initial form and concept). The sales increase gradually (not so much!) but we can live with our creations only, since about 5 years... The public is more larger than before, very curious and attentive, with more girls and young people." Hmm, perverting the youth of today, eh? Can only be good for them!

The Hyperium link has also meant that Philippe and Eliane can work on many projects at the same time, encompassing the whole diversity that is this duo. "After Elektrode, we have worked on the Ukiyo project with Akifumi Nakajima (Aube) and Mutsumi Oku, after a travel in Japan. And now just issued, the new D.F Sadist School project: "The Visionary Garden", supplemented with a book of photographies from 1980 to 1995 on Artware Edition. Experimental landscapes from noise to atmospheric, dark vibrating waves, visions of sleeping nude bodies abandoned in nature or in closed prisons of mind..."

And that is of course, not all, is it Phillipe? "So many things! First of all, our next CD: "L'ame Electrique", together with new films for live shows and video-clips/cassettes. Also new performances with a second female assistant on stage. A compilative box-set ("Museum of Ecstasy" 2CD), some new side-projects, an old tapes compilation, a best tracks compilation, photo exhibitions after the book issue... and promotion!

After more than ten years together Philippe and Eliane will continue to explore, experiment, above all love, and then let us share in their emotions.

The Music Industry

scrag sialoid

The term 'industrial' when applied to music used to be associated with bands such as the disturbing Throbbing Gristle and Skinny Puppy. These days however the whole 'industrial' scene captures sounds as far afield as Ministry and Fear Factory, with their heavy guitars and demented samples, to full on techno as produced by The Prodigy and The Shamen.

The media in the UK, tends to dismay bands and fans of the 'industrial' scene, by constantly slagging the music off! American bands such as Nine Inch Nails and White Zombie have recently managed to gain some praise in the UK Press, but the bands that actually come from the UK don't seem to fare so well.

I could waffle on about bands such as Killing Joke, Cabaret Voltaire and Nitzer Ebb who are but a few of the bands who built foundations for the UK Industrial scene. But anyone who thrives on this style of music has heard too much about these artists over the years and would like to sink their teeth into some fresh meat. So in this feature I'm going to try to mention as many of the British noise-makers that, either signed or unsigned, in my opinion deserve some credit, at least for slogging-on regardless of the abuse piled on by the likes of N.M.E and Melody Maker. Here goes (in no particular order of preference):

CUBANATE over the last year or so have gained some recognition - mainly for the death threats they received while on tour with Carcass, but with their techno ravings tinged lightly with guitar have gathered a loyal following of fans. It is however, difficult to imagine them keeping up the pace, when there are better bands that are less repetitive and a hell of a lot more consumer friendly.

The aggressive **JUDDA** for example - have gigged constantly, intimidated loads of people and to top it all off, stolen many of the hardened Cubanate fans by sounding like the Sisters Of Mercy after an extremely heavy dosage of mad max!

PIG who has been out of limelight for a while, leapt into 1993 with a support slot for Nine Inch Nails and with a re-vamped sound - obviously gained from the time singer Raymond Watts has spent working with Foetus and KMFDM in the past, sound stunning. It's just a shame their CD's are so impossible to get hold of, even though more recent material has included more work with KMFDM.

SHEEP ON DRUGS were fairly respected a couple of years back and I could rave on about these perverse hooligans for pages and pages - but won't!

CASSANDRA COMPLEX on the other hand are now based in Germany, and sound like Ministry. Surprisingly they manage to keep their goth roots and with the 1994 release "Sex And Death" prove they didn't lose track after the album "Cyberpunx" which even influenced Billy Idol!

TERMINAL POWER COMPANY after the release of "Run Silent, Run Deep" and their inclusion on the "Gothic Rock..." pile of shite, attracted a largely goth following. Then in 1993 the album "Red Skin Eclipse" (which in my opinion is fucking brilliant) was released. The recording being a mixture of harsh electronic mayhem and guitars seemed to be a success and gave the band a chance to convert a few of the N.I.N. fans into their ranks - a follow up entitled "Cyclops" is due for release shortly.

The UK industrial scene has also been spewing forth some unknown, but interesting bands, who also deserve a mention:

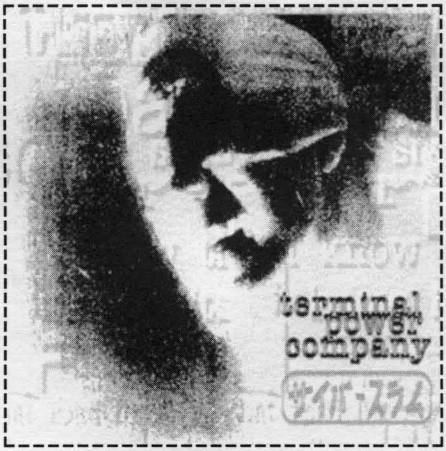
ULTRAVIOLENCE have been signed by Earache for some time, but have only just come into a realm of their own. Johnny Violent the band's only player has created a sound that introduces the techno/industrial heads to the pounding darkness of gabba and will be a hard act to compete against.

INFANT SKULL SURGERY from london, who create a sound akin to Murder Inc, with some very original ideas of their own have played around for long enough to gain a small clan of devoted fans.

VIRAL TECHNOLOGY also from london have been compared to as hitting not less harder than a Boeing 747 on free fall and with the release of four tapes and numerous live appearances (not just in the capital) have gained quite a reputation for their uncompromising techno/metal assaults.

Then there's the unrelenting aggravation of **LEECHWOMAN**! Who have supported both Cubanate and Judda with their percussive hammerings. Give them time to fester and they'll be up there with the best of the best.

Last but not least the extraordinary **DRUG FREE AMERICA**. These guys have been kicking around for some time, churning out the strangest sounds imaginable. Before 1990 they made a noise along the lines of aggressive goth, but these days they create vast soundscapes of ambience that will not let you go until you've injected their drug.



If you can't check out all these bands mentioned, then you're not really into the music industry. Burn out and fade away!

CYBER BOLLOCKS

dr. hellbent

Increasing demand for internet connectivity has had the unfortunate effect of increasing demand for experts to talk and spew on related issues, the meaning of it all and how to cope. This is not a new phenomenon in other subject areas, where hype and sell is part of the process, but there is a fundamental difference in the level of understanding, availability and potential in terms of the potential market. Philosophical and sociological understanding and the relevance to cause and effect permeate the arguments helping us to make sense of what is happening and what will happen.

What can we say about the rantings of emminent voices, without ourselves becoming part of the noise? Let's look at the alarming increase in predictions about future societies which revolve around information retrieval and dissemination. Information here is anything that can be stored digitally and reproduced accurately many times. Is this the new world of leisure that has been predicted since the 1960s, or merely a result of the capability? We seem to be talking less about the people and more about the machinery. The machinery only facilitates and we have always had choices of application. Much of the discussion focusses on updating, or reworking, theories to explain our current state. How about this one; the machinery facilitates our post-modernism, or at least we are using it in such a way to take us in that direction. There can be no conclusion to this process.

Time for a title change: hyper bollocks. Hyper refers to the extra views and relationships made possible with the current technology, and the production of these words merely compounds the effect. Criticism of the processes and results, bad or good, is clearly difficult, so we can attempt to resolve this by defining limits, and focus on the activities of people and organizations. A significant use of the internet is for accessing the World Wide Web, and following links, or hypertext, to other web pages. The terminology may be new but the concept is a familiar one of relationships and viewing. Bemused users follow links from site to site, from country to country, with no boundary. What the fuck is the point of this.

Let's be clear on one thing. Surfing the Web is often a pointless activity; amusement without reason. At the moment, network bandwidth is always approaching saturation levels, so our surfing becomes rather slow, tedious plodding. Surely there's more to it than this? Well, yes, there can be. More on that later, when I calm down.

Rhythm / Less

deadhead

Taking over this Techno-based column I'll be changing the format somewhat. I don't see the need (nor the point, to be honest) in covering too much ground that's already established in the major press. Even the NME/Melody Maker see there is a huge demand for dance music by issuing their own magazine, Muzik, thereby stepping up exposure. (I am desperately hoping that their press stranglehold doesn't take away readers from long-established dance papers such as DJ, MixMag, and the ever improving Generator.) Therefore, releases on well-documented labels will be found in the main review section, and not here. Obviously some may stray across at times, but we'll play around and see how it goes.

Basically I want to reserve space here for smaller labels and bands. Those just starting out or with only a few releases under their belt, and labels/bands who're not normally associated with techno, or those simply way off-centre in their output! Really I'd like this to be read by those still wary of the techno medium, as well as those already into techno. Dance music has always been looked upon with unnecesary dread by those in the experimental/extreme worlds, but it's time the realisation was made that techno in the mid-Nineties is moving on many different levels. There are those making structured, sequenced dance music and trance, there's hardcore (in this category there is some of the most extreme music being made), jungle (though, now overblown, it's becoming harder to find interesting work in this field), rap, and of course, the old buzzword, ambient, which I still prefer to regard as experimental. There are many different sub-divisions within the frame, and the good thing is that often techno artists will move around this framework and create differing styles, thereby staying fresh, and ensuring the techno market is constantly reinventing itself. Dub is now the cool phrase in the UK. So too, trip-hop, but these are merely by-products, a press categorization, they both stem from dance music as a whole.

I want this column to reflect new, but above all GOOD material, because let's face it there's a lot of dross out there too. But I don't want to break things down into mere categorization. If I can listen to and appreciate all the styles presented here, I don't see why anyone else can't even try.

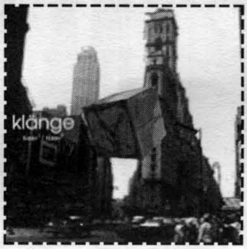
Possibly the best attempt at melding experimental and techno is coming from the German **MILLE PLATEAUX** label, but of course their material already receives some press exposure, so I have a dilemma, include it here, or not? Oh, what the hell, it's my column... **"Generation Star Wars"** is another stunning selection from **ALEC EMPIRE**. Whereas "**Limited Editions"** (one of the best albums of last year) was pretty lightweight and hypnotic, this new one may be hypnotic, but sure as hell isn't lightweight in any sense of the word. Commencing with a couple of minutes of deafening power electronics, the opening ten-minute 'Lash the 90ties', explores a haunting synthetic riff and intrudes upon a percussive onslaught of the Aphex variety. Unlike the Twin whose work is often minimal in its execution, Empire's is intricately filtered into a massive melting pot of sound. Much of "... Star Wars" is wholeheartedly extreme, and as nasty as you can get while still holding a musical edge. Repetition is held firmly at arm's length, clear patterns do emerge but get lost within the deluge of electronics. Dive fans should enjoy, perhaps even the odd Whitehouse devotee, anti-techno-heads should take note of this experimentation. The whole album is a clear exercise of sound creation and manipulation, and if anyone didn't believe that Alec Empire wasn't a genius in the mould of Aphex then they should give this a few listens. Plateaux's second compilation **"Modulation & Transformation II"** is more balanced than their first, featuring as it does all those in the realm of the label's brave new world. EMPIRE, OVAL, G.E.N., STEEL, and GAS are joined by AIR LIQUIDE, SCANNER and CHRISTIAN VOGEL. Can't tell you track titles or specifics as this double 12" copy (it's out on CD, thank the lord) has white labels with no details. Probably meant to be that way knowing Mille... Also on display is **GLOBAL ELECTRONIC NETWORK**'s **"Electronic Desert"** Coming soon after their "Rolleiflex" debut this second set is far more wholesome. Dubby space and sonorous rhythms... Again no track info, but they do list their bloody instruments - really useful! No sign of such nonsense on **ULTRAHIGH**'s **"The View Of..."** (**FORCE INC.**). Had to mention this album as it's for all those into blasting off and cruising in style, whilst perhaps taking a gob at the low-life below. In the same First Class cabin as Juno Reactor's "Transmissions" And now I must leave Mille/Force, otherwise this column will become the Achim Szepanski appreciation society...

Also from Germany, a new label laying down a stamp of quality in both recordings and packaging is **INCOMING!** Off the starting blocks with a timely fusion of dubisms, encompassing breeds of ambience and ethno, hip-hop to reggae, their two compilations, **"Serenity Dub 1.1 am"** and **"Serenity Dub 2.1 pm"** feature a calibre blend of music from a cross-section of bands. The line-up of both discs is MASSIVE. Putting the likes of the Volume/"Trans Europe..." crowd to shame through the labels' selection process of bands being able to make the project flow. KEITH LE BLANC, MAPPA MUNDI, ZUVUYA, MUSLIMGAUZE, DIVINE SOMA EXPERIENCE, and my faves from "1.1" ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION funk out over worldly tunes and sultry rhythms. "2.1" is literally a who's who... Laswell and Musso as TRANSONIC, RAPOON, SCANNER, MOUSE ON MARS, SEEFEEL, BIOSPHERE, Lagowski's SETI and LOOP GURU. Tranquil roots and organic technology all rolled into one, or I should say two huge spliffs worth. If any comparison was necessary this is Neodub being taken further out than the "Macro-Dub Infection" on Virgin. Not content conquering the compilation market the label has released **UNITONE HiFi**'s **"Wickedness Increased"** a collision of old-stylee roots rhythms and sexy trip-hop Nineties references. Cranked up, crawling percussion slithers whilst system vocals echo lazily through. A hazy chill. And once you're in a suitably blissful state the label begin to wind down even further through the low reel of **NONPLACE URBAN FIELD**'s **"Nuf Said"** Tracking ambience and rippling percussion snake with mellow, funky movers. MC 900 Ft Jesus would find himself grooving to 'Stupid Little Automatic Servants' while Namlook could shake his hips to 'Hinnennuss' Psychedelic. Jazzy. Eclectic. INCOMING!

There's a fresh (or more appropriately, rotting...) dub-gangsta on the block... He's the **WITCHMAN**. Fucked over a diet of pulp horror, bleak soundtracks and an acre of weed, his **"Main Vein"** EP on **BLUE ANGEL** (not exactly a convincing label-name where this man is concerned...) is a bloodied nose of drugged hip-hop grooves, rumbling bass and eyes-rolled-right-to-the-back-of-the-head zombied effects. Four tracks created for the beast within, unleashed over a sensorious dub which has never been witnessed before. There's a Wagon Christ mix to attract the punters but I prefer the untouched raw vein of the Witchman himself. 'Roll up a phat one...' indeed. Though you may just shit yourself without the habit too...

ELECTROBEAT, an all electronic label from Miami in the States have a wide variety of machined sounds in their catalogue. One of the finest is **FUZZY LOGIC**, a sonic alter of trance beats, gushing sequences and studious production. Holding away from any acid references their tones filter through a filmic edge, highly technoid but never purely robotic in texture. 'Circle of Thoughts' ripples with efforvesence, a luminary track with a highly 'happy' feel, whilst tipping the other scale is 'Industrial Art' which is forcefully rhythmic and darkly toned. **"Gray Or Green Numbers"** is clearly a work which has been fully thought out, from minds who obviously care about their synthetic creations. For those a little nervy about shelling out on a purely unknown CD the label has a 2CD compilation featuring tracks from all their bands. TOYS FOR THE REVOLUTION, URBAN SELECT, THE BEAT CLUB, HOLISTIC (whose **"Feelings Not Frequencies"** CD is exclusively licensed) and FUZZY LOGIC are all present. The second disc (actually a bonus disc) of the **"Musica Electronica"** package is a repressing of their first introductory compilation. This time fourteen tracks from three bands; BEAT CLUB, TOYS... and ONY including a track 'Security' produced by Bernard Sumner on which he also sings. Unusually Electrobeat is a label of warmth whose material though all electronic has a measured human input.

A wealth of good electronics is emerging from the Arctic circle, enhanced by the success of Biosphere. In this issue we cover **BEATSERVICE** in some depth, but here is another Norwegian label, **dBUT RECORDINGS** who dabble, but not only in the techno field. Their sampler **"Ur-Rauten"** which includes BIOSPHERE's 'Botanical Dimensions' is a bizarre selection of oddities. Experimental scrapings, work side by side vocal operatics, classical, acoustics and Eastern flavourings. Excerpts from "The Black Death" open from WHEN. Nightmarish medieval torturings, and tuneful electronics weald themselves through a dark ambience. WALDEMAR HEPSTEIN sounds like an insane Renaldo or Residents. SABELLA TALK is almost spokenword, but underneath lies the greatest trip-hop, dub drum-track you've never heard, because it's so buried it's virtually inaudible. After 22 tracks it all ends with the sublime ambience of ULF KNUDSEN, who matches a Biosphere styled bass-backing and one-note synth tones. The fact that I've reviewed this in the techno section show exactly the thoughts I want to get across. These days there are no boundaries. First-hand experience is necessary. **BEATSERVICE**' **"TOS.CD"** is closer to structured techno material. Again with local-lad, BIOSPHERE in tow and a remix of 'Fairy Tale' (the best track from "Microgravity" in my opinion), this is probably the best compilation highlighting music from Scandinavia. B-CODE open up pretty formally with a mix of rave, tribal and house. MENTAL OVERDRIVE is house, similar in style to Laurent Garnier, while JIMJAM is softcore house, come rave. Trance is on-board via TROMSDALEN FUNK MASSIVE's deep rushing grooves, and DYNAMIC BITS harsh, haunting scapes. WILHELM VIEW slows the flow with 'M.O.P Intruder' and its intrusive use of scanner recordings, and atmospheric samplings. SEA's 'Squid Fluid' is another experimenting with sound, though rather more up-front in execution. ELECTRIP-C is also featured, and his **"Peace Machinery"** album on the same label should be explored for its wide range of rhythms and frantic sound explosions. In all 14 tracks on the "TOS.CD" reveal the whole cosmos of techno, tipping both the commercial and non-commercial scales..



The Italian **MINUS HABENS** label has always been a rich area for picking electronic innovators and its **KLANGE** project is no less challenging. This one-man circuit-board already has the acclaimed **"The Hertz/Heart Files"** to his credit and now releases **"Time Cube In Time Square"** A sub-space experience with trigger, upon trigger of uptempo tones. Sparkling signals which meander, and at times cruise with energy, circling the consciousness with a timeless efficiency. A deliriously tasteful technology. More known for its techno material is the **DISTURBANCE** offshoot label, which in these times is probably greater known than its parent. Two of its latest releases are **ASTRAL BODY**'s **"Auroral Belt Side"** and **"Quadrivelogue"** by **LE FORBICI DI MANITU**, both of these being debut albums from home-grown produce. The former is a chilled trance outing, rippling in all the right places without having too much to say for itself. Perhaps overly funky, tracks with the forceful fuse of 'A Bad God In The Mysthical Spirit Of The Man' are few and far between. "Quadrivelogue" is an alternative sea of electrodes, coming as it does from artists with a rich background for producing music of, shall we say, a more experimental edge. Well known journalist and postal mediator Vittore Baroni, Manitu Rossi and Enrico Marani, ex of Italian scapists T.A.C., all play their part to make this album that little bit different. Chilling trance (or not quite so chill!) is again the order, but this time there's a wealth of production to move it forward. In fact these four pieces are intended as a focus on modes of travel. Percussion is used well, maximim propulsion can be felt but the overall sound hides its abrasive tones well in the mix. 'Mackenzietherapy' works particularly well as a strange mix of Kraftwerk styled pulses lighten hard (but slowed) Frankfurt beats, single repetitive string note and a breath of synthetics wind clockwork-like producing a continuous wave. These tracks are apparently only fragments mutated from their "Trivelogue" album yet to be released. I can't wait for that... If you're in the mood why not track the label's latest 12" singles from **XYREX**, **DYNAMIC WAVE** and **A3000**. From ambient to hypnotics most releases are sure to satisfy.

FACELESS, a duo of ex-students (strange job title: 'ex-students') whose **"Achievement"** CD opens in a stress-removed Scorn way with looping bass and drums, navigate mellow waters through sub-meditative Underworld backing and trancey keys. The 9 tracks rarely break the surface, content in rippling ambient tones in measured doses. A greatly sedate piece of programmed frequencies. On the same label, **NOISEBOX**, from Norfolk, comes an 'ambient electronic' sampler **"Mechanised Paradise"** where Faceless lend the title track, which is a gorgeously drifting piece with vocal callings - possibly the next British Airways ad. music! Three other acts from East Anglia offer two tracks a piece. TOXIC FREQUENCY which is none other than Mark Crumby of Impulse, centres around repetitious high-end tones. Does anyone remember Testcard F? A wonderful toytown synth-pop act of the Eighties. Well, ALPHA SEVEN is Pete Roberts of said band and now he produces minimalist new age, space rock. I prefer Testcard F! Last of the bunch is UXB. Voyaging through space realms themselves, they manage to instill a touch of menace at least. Only Faceless really stand out as having something new to offer though, so check out their album instead.

What's lacking in originality from much of the East Anglian bands above, can be found in abundance in Arno Peeters, **SP@SMS**' project. Released on the Dutch **DJAX-UP-BEATS**, **"Fuzzy Logic"** is a grey area indeed. No 'up-beats' involved here, this work overflows with ideas on how to engage the listener with a full-on headphone experience. Transistors glisten, bleep-tones burble, voices spew utter garbage and minimal backbeats merge becoming interludes of tracking silence. It's like a John Duncan tuning-in session brought bang up to date with today's overwhelming technology. 'U Fear ETP' is one of the most distressing pieces of soundtrack material I've ever heard, humidly draining, and distressingly violent. So much detail is paid to every spliced ingredient of this CD, that its 71 minutes pass with with not one flinching glance away from its attentive gaze, thereby ensuring "Fuzzy Logic" is every second the best experimental disk you'll hear this year... **MIKE DEARBORN** opens his **"Muzikal Journey"** on the same label, by informing us through his 'Intro' that he'll take us places we haven't been before. I was fearful from this naff vocal introduction that in fact the disc would lead into the places we already know only too well. How wrong I was. Razor-sharp, grimy synth tones run the length and breadth of this album. So precisely toned against a semi-hard backing rhythm. Without bludgeoning with a mass of over-the-edge beats Dearborn, through the grating sequences alone sets this up against the hardest techno you might ever succomb to. Jeff Mills' lovers take note. Wicked!

Japanese sounds seem to be filtering through in small quantities, though I've yet to see much of it - hint, hint! Did pick up the first release on **REEL**, a 12" by **FLARE "Nettin Pure 1"** Medium beats with cool plonky synths, acid breaks and dodgy stomping drum stand-offs. 3 tracks, no titles, the best of which was the flipped 45 rpm metallic offbeat mechanoia, with Eastern sample twiddles. Similar to Lagowski's strongly built movers. Vinyl well worth extending that overdraft for.

The second release on the **DECAY RECORDS** label from Denmark (see Institute for Criminally Insane review in Reverb), and in my mind clearly establishing the label very quickly indeed. **A.U.M.** offer an album of Industrial Techno, with a character all of its own. Massive sequenced attacks, build upon voice samples, degrees of drums and noise, all fusing in a blender, spewing 25 tracks which all have a definition of their own. Produced with a definitive experimental leaning, even touching the borders of dub. The sleeve remarks, 'From 124 to 2000 BPM in 53:54

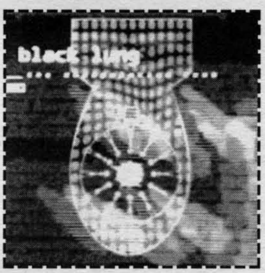
Min.' but **"Morph"** is not merely a mass of Hardcore Techno. Just when you thought the parameters of Techno had all been breached, A.U.M. re-invent a new strategy.

Success of the year must be the Finnish **SAKHO RECORDINGS** label, whose Panasonic newie is soon to be unleashed on Blast First. Two slabs of Sakho vinyl hit this deck. The first by **KIRLIAN**, **"Porzellangasse Grooves Part 1"** is a two-tracker with cheeky tuneless phrases and brief, dippy rushing sequences. Beyond mere minimalism. **SIL ELECTRONICS** prefer an underhanded approach. The **"Tal-S"** 12" tries hard to stay below the surface, clicks and vibrations slowly gain ground as large fields of static hold percussion elements firmly at bay. Truely one of the great innovators in electronic music, it's more than pleasing to see Sakho being fully recognised. And don't forget where you read that ø review first kids!!!

You may have noticed in Minds' Eye that Dan Burke is looking for new material for his **BINARY** label. Well, the first release is Jordan Trais' **ASTROCAT**. **"Realms"** follows vinyl for Drop Bass, Big Bam Boom, Analogue and Defective Records, so as you'll see he's created a stir in the U.S. already. Above all this CD is smooth and repetitive, with superb throbbing basslines, which constantly snarl and grind, preventing any complaints of being purely acid-driven. Touches of CV style drum-tracks, circa "Percussion Force" lend a funky feel, on 'Taste' especially, which offers minimalism against the outright trance of 'Faith' and 'Node' Obviously the cat has a wealth of influences, and he's managed to throw them all around and created a 60 minute groove worthy of anyone's attention.

Lovers of more commercial techno could try checking out **FORTIFICATION**'s **"Organism"** CD single on **DISCORDIA**, a German label not exactly known for its dance music (they even refused to distribute our Arthur Loves Plastic release), excepting EBM. The title track has a bubbly trance infusion with occasional lyrical interludes, and a very slight house piano influence nearing its six minutes conclusion. 'Experience Virtual Reality' is less impressive as the spoken vocal at the beginning is rather intrusive. Could even be regarded as 'pop' if it wasn't for the constant rhythm forging beyond. Closing is an edited 'Organism' which I could vision playing on MTV's "Party Zone" no problem.

Belgium's **NOVA ZEMBLA** label should need no introduction having carved themselves a hefty slice of the UK/European marketplace, but one of their artists, David Thrussell, or **BLACK LUNG** has moved swiftly following the highly rated **"Silent Weapons..."** album on **DOROBO** and created an album of well above the average left-field electro. **"The Depopulation Bomb"** has the texture of DVA's synthesis, though with a machine all its own. Sarcastic titles such as 'Joyful Slaughter (of the capitalist swine)' and appropriately 'The More Confusion... The More Profit' are manufactured in such a non-conformist style, that at times is hard to note exactly where to place this piece of genius. Influences aren't easy to spot either, in fact I can't see any! The set feels like it's coming from a soundtrack perspective whilst using repetitive trance sequences - though that's not the sum of its whole. What it is NOT is the description on the cover; 'Hard Bleep Soundtrack", for that would be far too boring! "The Depopulation Bomb" is not always a fill of noise, but the tone is overtly dark and gruesome. Underrated.



After a series of 12" singles the **JUST CREATE** label offers its first digital compilation. **"Ambient Northern Lights Vol. 1"** brings together artists from the North of England, many of which have had very little previous exposure. IAN BODDY is the biggest name involved and his track, 'Sequence in Blue' gives a true indication of how good this musician is. A forging sequenced track moving in many cycles, as a distant vocal soars within. TRAUMA CLUB is further trance, with a much spacier vibe, and clever use of samples. DEEP LEVEL's use of piano brings to mind Enigma, and their track 'Cabbage White' is immensely rich. TRIDENT use post-jungle drum beats, slowing them to match the dubby, wasted backing - one of the strongest tracks, containing a blend of tight, yet experimental production. 2 CABBAGES ON A DRIP as well as having a strange name manage to drag acid along to the 21st Century with the closing track, 'Calm' Just Create have produced a compilation of the highest order, and without resorting to 'name' artists to achieve product potential. Opened my eyes as to the wealth of talent there is in this country alone.

Sweden's **PLANET RHYTHM**, weird-out on their offshoot **AUDIO POLLUTION** label with a debut CD release from **SIR JEREMY AUGUSTUS HUTLEY of GRANITH HALL** and his **"The Kattajaq Story"** Sleevenotes reccount a trip through a dark forest - 'trip' being optimum here - and stumbling across a festival of drums and chants, where he was welcomed, becoming part of the celebrations himself. Heavy? Well, no not really, the two-tracks involved merely follow the story telling. A long introduction of field and bird-song, moves on until the vague sound of drums and voices can be heard. Moving closer they become louder until a repetitive jungle incantation completely overwhelms. The depth of this sound utterly takes over the mind, as if drinking the elixir which Sir Hutley had taken, oneself. After 40 minutes a barrage of drums commences, sounding like the rapid-pumping of the heart, is reaching through the body. Voices become distorted until finally passing out. The second track, 'Kookaburra' trances, didgeridoo-style, snaking through the mellow drum-track and vague affected wailing. Definitely sixty minutes of intrigue and the first of a 'concept' series of releases on the label. **PLANET RHYTHM** themselves have gathered up a bunch of past releases and unreleased material for their **"The First Orbit"** compilation. Quality trance of mostly the hard variety from the likes of Robert Leiner (as ROTORTYPE), VECTOR and WAVE SLAVES with major award going to GENECOM, whose 'Sunchase' adds a disjointedness to the pulsing beats.

ACV doesn't really need any introduction. Or does it? If you don't know the Italian label check out their long double CD set **"SHOUT The Future Tribe"**. Containing home-grown material from the likes of SANDRO GALLI, HERTZ and RICCARDO ROCCHI (his opener is unbelievably good - spacey, upfront trance), rubbing shoulders with the Japanese minimal NAGAI ERI, the Industrial sonics of Germany's SPENCER SMITH and DAVE WALKER's (U.S.) percussive ambience, plus a shitload of other good stuff by the likes of DAVE CLARKE. The second disc of the pack features two 30 minute mixes by ROBERT ARMANI and MARK EG. Armani's is familiar well 'ard, 'in yer face' gear, while EG holds the reins and focusses on instrumentation rather than attack. This set includes a great surrealscope 'Insert' by HERTZ. I'm not usually that much of a fan of these mix things, but these haven't fucked around with the original music too much which helps. 'Insert' can also be heard on the four-track **HERTZ** 12" **"EP"**, furthering rhythms and outer dimensions.

bostich
elektronische
bostich. elektronische

The pressure of 'Tubular Kick' just has to be felt to be believed. More vinyl from the label comes in the form of **TRAXX BOY**'s deep minimal funk on **"A Trip Towards Chicago"**, **SANDRO GALLI**'s four wicked thudding tracks on the **"Virtual Vision"** EP (on **Hot Trax** offshoot) and **OLOGRAPHIC STATE**'s **"Tribe"** EP (on **Out Of Orbit**) which experiments in subtle, understated percussion and shaping synthetics. All have character of their own, but none quite reach the productive ceiling of Hertz. ACV, a label forcing the techno limits higher and wider...

It's virtually impossible keeping up with the multifarious projects of Atom Heart, but one place to keep an eye glued to is his own **RATHER INTERESTING** label. Already missing a shitload of good releases, one definitely not to miss is his own **SEMIACOUSTIC NATURE** self-titled CD. Of course, this is Atom himself in deep-trance filled mode. Mellow to extremes the songs revolve around soft pulses, sampled bells and characteristic well-stated percussion. Throughout birdsong is used and altered to become another recording effect. Sounding almost spacey in snatches, 'Love Letters in OCR' features sampled voices complementing the clear electronic tones. Atom Heart understands how to create and manipulate tone so well, and this new project, as with most of his others, moves so effortlessly. King of the digital domain. I was expecting something a touch harder on the **VSVN** double 12". Very Synthetic Virtual Noise may be the cleanest sound you're ever likely to hear this year, but its minimality lacked too much in the way of real noise. Eight long tracks generating sound repetition. 'Produced' by Atom Heart! Yeah, music by VSVN.., right!!

F COMMUNICATIONS is a label which everyone should know as the home of Laurent Garnier, but I'm not sure if their whole catalogue is highlighted so well? Two EP's from the French label which are more than worth the investment are from **IBERIAN** and **ALASKA**. Iberian's six tracker, "**Manufactured"** is a loose configuration of hard trance and dubbier influences which are dealt with in a suitably harsh way. The second track 'Darius' is gloriously spacious and cutting, slowly adding acidic elements to burn away at the rhythm. Garnier's Alaska project really carries on where his debut album left off. **"Deuxieme"** is full of wide open tracks which are allowed to build and build, and build some more... He manages to reveal an enormously heavy sound from such a minimal production. Four new tracks which owners of "Shot In The Dark" should not be without.

BOSTISCH is a one-man project from Mexico who releases on the **OPCION SONICA** label. His album, **"Elektonische"** is a placid blend of repetitive, hi-hat laced trance. Not sure if this is his debut as have no facts about Ramon Amezcua's work, but if it is he's matured very quickly indeed. Couldn't exactly call his music highly original, lying somehere in the middle of Laurent Garnier's less hard-nosed tracks, but the fact that Bostisch is Mexican, and on a Mexican label deserves to be highlighted.

Medium strength Frankfurt beat can be viewed on new label, **JJ**. Ultimately synthetic with industrial edges, one might expect a complete repetition from beginning to end, but the two instigators, **STEVE STOLL & MIKE McCOY** on their **"ACID - PIN - UP"** vary track styles, completely changing identity on occasions. In fact, listening to one track after another, this could quite easily be a compilation of seventeen bands. The pieces themselves are of course repetitive in execution but it's the manner in which the sounds are put together. All are fairly minimal but play around with percussive measures, soft/hard acid tones and analogue trance. They even dabble with the odd vocal sample - sample being the optimum word. Stand out has to be the totally abrasive eighth track 'ca%ozleen 909' which not only heightens the volume but stomps in the best industrial tradition. Who needs compilations when single artists are differing musical styles all on their own.

PRODUCTIONS on the German **LADOMAT 2000** label. Although they don't really play around with styles in the same way as Stoll and McCoy, Whirlpool Prod. do include some cute classical and outer edge samples to their brand of minimal techno-funk on **"Brian De Palma"** nothing to do with one of this time's most stylish film directors that I could see... The sound is laced with Seventies' references, though overall the set has a happy Nineties feel. Grab those handbags and groove ladies...

SILENT RECORDS have come under a lot of criticism in these pages for their supposed lack of imagination in the techno field. I myself, find the criticism a little unfounded, especially as they have been one of the forces in creating a market in the States for electronic music of all spheres. One of their titles which really did catch the eye is by **LOST LEGION**, which is a group of Italian musicians working under a collective name. There are 'band' names within this release, but as it is really one group of musicians I'll disregard that information. The music itself is a loose, but fluid blend of rhythm and pulses. In moments trance-like and at a turn ambient, the stand-out really is the second 'Kharmasutra' with its suitably sultry whispering machines and whining pipes. **"Space Log 1.1"** the full album title is recommended and don't take as gospel all that's been said about the label before. This title has also been picked up by the Danish **GAMMA RECORDINGS**, with I have to admit, much better artwork!

Highly Recommended:

BLACK LUNG The
Depopulation Bomb CD
MIKE DEARBORN
Muzikal Journey CD
ALEC EMPIRE Generation
Star Wars CD
HERTZ EP 12"
LOST LEGION Space Log
1.1 CD
v/a Serenity Dub
1.1am CD
SP@SMS Fuzzy Logic CD
ULTRAHIGH
The View Of... CD
WITCHMAN Main Vein 12"
EP

Any items for review in rhythm / less should be sent to deadhead

ACV c/o A&D Music and Vision Ltd, 214 Saga Centre, 326 Kensal
Road, London W10 5BZ, UK.
Beatservice Records, Box 5299 9024 Tomasjord, Norway.
Binary Recordings, PO Box 59604, Schaumberg, IL 60159-0604, USA.
Blue Angel, 7 Westbourne Grove Mews, London W11 2RU, UK.
dBUT Recordings, PO Box 9415, Valeranga, 0610 Oslo, Norway.
Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany
Djax Records, PO Box 2408, 5600 CK Eindhoven, The Netherlands.
Decay Records, PO Box 179 DK-1005 Copenhagen, Denmark.
Electrobeat, POB 69-3761 Miami, FL 33269 USA
F Communications, 11 Rue de Clichy, 75009 Paris, France.
Gamma Recordings, Badstuestraede 15, DK 1209 Cph, Denmark
Incoming! [Fax: +49 911 449883]
JJ, Tongestrasse 42, 60311 Frankfurt, Germany.
Just Create Records, PO Box 36, Blaydon, Tyne & Wear NE39 2YZ, UK.
Ladomat 2000, Max-Brauer-Allee 163, 22765 Hamburg, Germany
Mille Plateaux / Force Inc. [Fax: +49 69 239918]
Minus Habens Records / Disturbance, Via Guistino Fortunato 8/N,
70125 Bari, Italy.
Noisebox Records, Fishmarket, Mountergate, Norwich, NR1 1PZ, UK.
Nova Zembla, Krijgsbaan 240, Zwijndrecht 2070, Antwerp Belgium.
Opcion Sonica, Tamaulipas # 125-23, Col. Condensa, Mexico D.F.,
C.P 06140
Planet Rhythm / Audio Pollution, St. Eriksgatan 17 112 39 Stockholm,
Sweden.
Rather Interesting [Fax: +49 69 700563].
Reel, 36-17 202 Udagawa-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150, Japan.
Sakho Recordings, Peramiehenkatu 11 00150 Helsinki, Finland.

"We always thought that there should be Colin Newman releases, but it was not the first priority"

SWIM

'Tone Float' deadhead

Swim; 'to propel the body through water' The water in this instance is murky, and often treacherous, being the seas of the music industry. An industry where label-boss, Colin Newman, with his wife and partner, Malka Spigel, have been involved in for around two decades. Best known as one-quarter of one of the most influential art-pop/rock groups Wire, Colin, is now role-reversing and behind the control-room, instigating the Swim label.

In a short period of time Swim has floated to the surface with a series of CD's and 12" singles, all gaining respect amongst the reviewing fraternity, well, those who appreciate musical quality rather than a re-hash of past ideas anyway. One only has to witness the number of so-called Indie bands who are blatantly ripping the Wire sound from the backs of Newman/Gilbert/Lewis/Gotobed today in the name of 'cash-flow' no names mentioned, we know where you live though... That's one of the reasons why Swim is constantly impressing, and more than anything it's refreshing to witness a couple who believe wholeheartedly in theirs' and others' music, and have the ability to release music which means something to them.

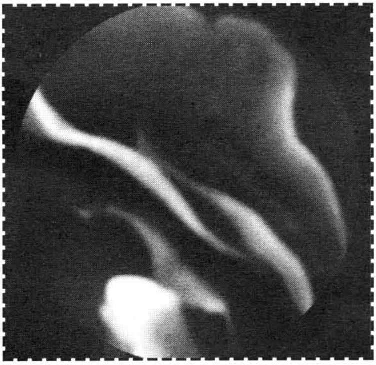
I should hasten to add that Swim is more than Colin Newman. His wife Malka plays a role as an equal, so this interview shall see Swim replies, rather than individual responses.

Having been in the business for so many years, why is the time right for a label now? "As a musician you start normally having very little control over how your work is presented, in a group there are the other members to be considered, everyone wants to have their say, managers, record companies, licensees, etc. In general artists take more control of their 'careers' as they survive longer in the business. The big step which we took was to amass enough gear with which we could produce our own master tapes making us less reliant on having another record company to give us the finance to make the records. We became a de facto production house, this was made easier because the aesthetic of the records we liked and wanted to emulate was very much 'home studio' This is a big thing for musicians of our generation, the power to make your own master, being a couple who are both musicians makes it easier to justify the minimal, by comparison to the big boys, but still substantial, to ordinary people, costs involved in setting up a studio."

So, having their production studio in place, Swim launches itself from the springboard. Why Swim? And why now, in this current dance music climate? "The thinking behind the label is pretty simple, we can use it as a vehicle for our own stuff and also release music by people who's music we consider exciting and original. The timing relates more to our own natural development." And probably sick of dealing with record business people by now, though this wasn't said! "The current musical climate is open to new ideas but each genre imposes its own rules which we don't necessarily like to follow!"

The last statement is plainly obvious. Having received huge acclaim for Swim's electronic listening music releases, the label also outputs pop-invoking material from the likes of Plastic Venus and its own Malka Spigel. That's not playing the game! "Our aim is to release things that excite us regardless of genre, but we can't really say yet if this works against us as a label. We try to be as upfront as possible about our cross-genre releasing policy, interestingly part of our appeal to 'dance' artists is the fact that we don't just release one type of music." But, the dangers lie in the hands of the press, who like, and to some extent need pigeonholes. Artists are usually the last people to put their own creations in boxes. I welcome the nerve of Swim. If only more labels had the guts to do just whatever the hell they liked.

They do state that the majority of music they like at the moment is in the 'electronic' field, and I could find no better example of new electronica than Swim's own Immersion. It's become a kind of 'in-house' band since the "Oscillating" CD, with a whole series of remixes from left-field artists. I had no idea who was behind Immersion. A bunch of Germans perhaps? Renegades from Mille Plateaux? I was to be surprised... "It's probably by now an open secret that Immersion are in fact us two!" I've obviously been spending too much time in a darkened room, planning and conspiring, and all the while blind to the obvious. "We created an elaborate alter identity partly for fun, but also we did it because we wanted to make something where we didn't have to be 'ourselves' to be free of not only other people's expectations of us but our own."



Newman/Spigel's Immersion obviously had an effect on many artists, in the same way as when I heard their CD, because 'names' were falling over themselves in anticipation of remixing the project. "By a series of coincidences we got to know Mark Gage, who's Vapourspace and Cusp projects we were already big fans. We were really surprised that he was more than familiar with our previous work and loved Immersion. So we asked him to do a remix. Similarly Robin Rimbaud (Scanner, Trawl) was someone who heard the Oracle remix record and had really liked the 'Oscillating' (Immersion) treatment, he knew through friends that it was us and encouraged us greatly." Inevitability took over and they asked him to do a remix and it spiralled from there. "It was really based on a circle of friends. We were really surprised and flattered by how many people the project attracted and feel very grateful for their excellent attention. It made us lots of new friends!" And, what's next after volume one of the remix CD? "Immersion have a 12" ready for Autumn release which they are very excited by!"

My next question is now completely obsolete, as I was going to ask if Colin was taking a breather from any recording, and concentrating only on running the label! Immersion proves he hasn't forsaken the musician inside him. "Actually the Spigel-Newman axis has been pretty well implicated in the majority of Swim's releases. We, made Malka's and Colin's records, are 2/3 of Oracle, are all of Immersion and Intens. Co-produce Resolution and Plastic Venus, as well as running the label!" Phew. But I did still wonder why it has taken so long for some new material to be issued as 'Colin Newman'? "We always thought that there should be Colin Newman releases, but it was not the first priority. This is simply because if it's "Colin Newman's label putting out Colin Newman's records" expectation has already limited what people's view of it is. In fact Swim is a team, Swim is Swim!"

With bases in the UK, USA and Japan, Swim is no doubt a global concern. A plan from the beginning? "Swim is not a very planned thing, we consider that we are still building it. We don't know yet where biggest potential audience is for any of our releases, our sales tend to be governed by the strength of the distribution in various places. So much also depends on what the releases are. Like anything else you think that if you achieve certain goals you've made it but then there is always another mountain to climb! We survive, that's all we can say."

Survival in the shark-infested industry of music is a goal in itself. Now having reached way beyond the initiation test of debut releases who's left for Swim to work with? Just about the world and his wife has remixed Immersion, but there must be other innovators they could tempt? "We don't have the arrogance (or money) to assume that we can work with anyone we please. There are lots of talented people out there, the fact that we are already working with some of them is amazing to us! We are aware (from our own experience) how record companies can be quite insensitive and out of touch with the aspirations of their artists (not always to sell the maximum number of records!). We make music for all kinds of obscure reasons, artists can identify with that. We hope to never forget that if we take something on that people are putting some kind of trust in us."

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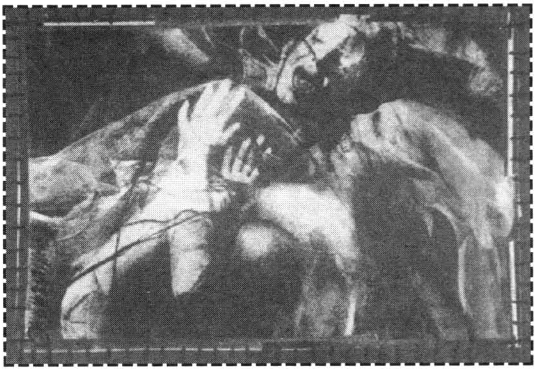
> **"I want to reflect the "demon" we are, to remind this powerful storm we get inside us, which is repressed"**

FRANCOISE DUVIVIER

'Cruel Beauty'

george

Francoise Duvivier has a highly acclaimed profile for her dark and disturbing visual icons. Her works of art are unmistakable and unforgettable, images which shock and numb your sensibilities, and fascinate you by their intricate composition. She has acquired worldwide exposure and interest from her many variant projects be it working with RRRecords and Minus Habens, or book projects like Machinery (supplying images to the words of J. Lehmus), add this to her endless coverage within the realms of the more off-centre press Duvivier is a force impossible to ignore.



Take for example "Images" Duvivier's collaboration with Dive, in the introduction of which she states she wants her images "to express tragedy" In a world where there are already too many disturbing images of tragedy in the world, on our streets, TVs do we need more tragedy? Or do these harrowing subjects of her work merely mirror the horror and tragedy of our decaying society?

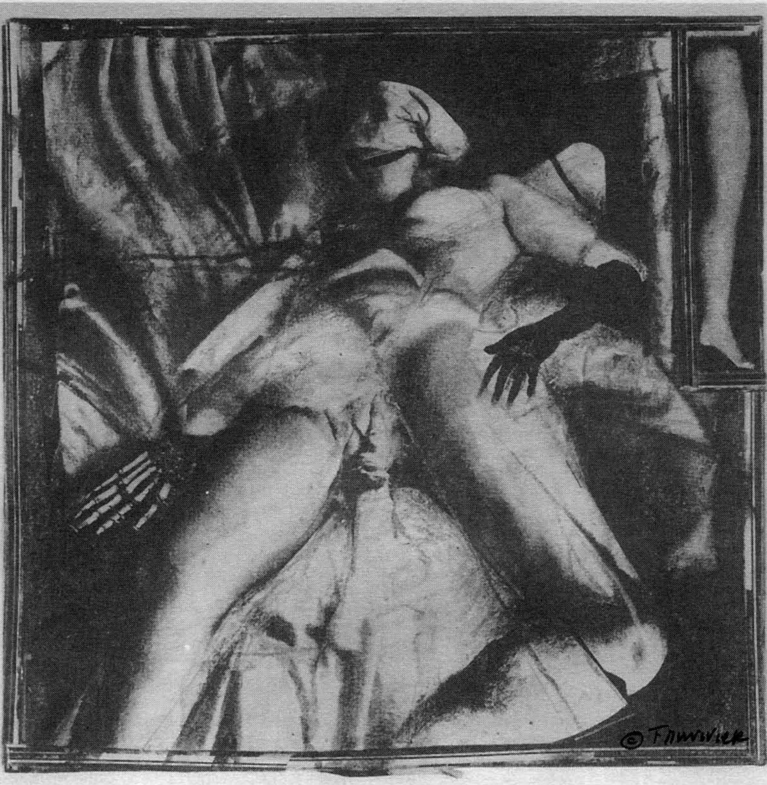
"Yes, I want my images or my dolls & masks to express our whole tragedy. Never mind if there is already too many disturbing images of tragedy in the world. On this point, I would like to make you notice that all these disturbing images you can see on our TV's, etc., lack of sensitivity and feelings. We're unable to imagine the tragedy of each person through these abstract numbers of dead people which are related on our TVs. Indeed these numbers hide the big tragedy of everyone. Our infos are only made of hermetic numbers where our individuality gets no more than an ordinary quantity in this reality. Notice that many people watch their TVs with indifference, get accustomed with violence and barbarism. They get cold and distant, most of them get voyeurs and somewhere they enjoy seeing all this violence at TV as a big spectacle when they're seated in a comfortable armchair, drinking some fresh beers. Today, I think that people are getting more and more unable to see the difference between a horror movie and their own bloody actuality. I'm going to ask you a question: "Why these "Same" people, who are "Able" to watch disturbing images on their TVs or newspapers, are often scared with my collages, dolls and masks?"...OK, I let you answer. But know, it's just what I want, I want them to be frightened, disgusted by this horror and tragedy, I express through my images. I want them to move inside and to be shocked in their deep and inner feelings. I don't think that the images on our TVs are able to move us. The TVs get abstract screens which bring sensuality to our bloody reality. I've chosen to express our dark tragedy because our actual world is really black, and my images reflect this atmosphere in black and white. Black and white are the colour of Death, and Death has always been our daily reality. Notice that today, this death is getting more "taboo" more "taboo" than everything dealing with Sex. Today, we don't want to get old and wrinkled. We reject Death and we want to stay young and beautiful, as clean as our modern architecture. You can see now plenty of people preoccupied with their youth, and get more afraid of Death. They're for me, typical symptoms of a sick society. I think of the Middle-Age, where Death was our daily tragedy, but I want you to notice that the mind of people was different from today, and on the contrary, they showed the death. The imagery was plenty of skeletons and showed honestly our decay. Today, we reject this decay and we lack humility. Indeed, we live a strange era when, for example, thinking of "AIDS" the sexual "Plague" of our end of century, this terrible disease which gets new mentalities. People wish to be "Clean" and puritanism is getting stronger. The religions, the sects and the fanaticism, etc., get mad. So many people reproach me that my art lacks of "Light" I want only to reflect our "obscurantism" with all its darkness, made of intolerance, fanaticism and violence. You can see my work as a mirror of your decaying society, but take care, a "mirror" is only cold, it reflects only, without rebellion, when I want to express this "tragedy" in my mirror: "Our tragedy" Especially, I'm afraid of this world and I express only "our" fear, and my fear is big. I have no shame of this fear, because it's a light of sensitivity and feeling in a world which is getting more preoccupied with business and how to use humans as money, objects, or hostages. Then I want to express tragedy, horror and big emotions through my art, because I can't support the insane mentality of our mainstream culture, cold and clean which you can see in the galleries, Salons, Art magazines, etc....Indeed, this "High" culture is not preoccupied with our big problems and feature this distant art, blind and unable to talk us. Most of the artists are more preoccupied to be helped by politics, be honoured and famous. So it's better to be moderated and say nothing through this "high" culture. Tragedy gets emotions in our life and we do need to get back these inner feelings. We need to be "shocked" What I want to express, too, is not only our actuality around us, it's also our "Inner" war, and all our "inner" "Demons" I don't believe in Peace if nobody is able to see his/her own inner and terrible war. My kind of art may be your mirror, but more especially, your inner mirror."

A re-occurring element of Francoise work are the images of infants - mutilated babies and foetuses especially in Collages - what is strange motivation or fascination could encourage these images? With her constant imagery of mutilation of the human form could we actually be observation her visions our imminent self-destruction?

"You're right. I made a lot of images, featuring mutilated babies and foetuses. It's strange because I've actually stopped doing this kind of images. Surely, I want to express that Birth and Death are mixed, so you can see sometimes foetuses next to skeletons. Some babies are mutilated, I think that our future will decide of our body. I think of Ecology, and I'll remind you the example of the babies born after the Chernobyl's catastrophe. It's horrible, and it's one only example among others. This dark actuality can give you other disturbing images of mutilated babies because of pollution, and dangerous medicines with dramatic second effects. No, I'm not fascinated with these images. On the contrary, I express my fear in front of all that. Generally the human form in my collages is mutilated, and I could repeat what I already said above. Somewhere, I feel myself "destructed" as a citizen living in our society. I suppose that we're getting more "destructed" in our modern societies, too much structured, where our feelings are censored, erased. Notice that this society wants to be "clean" "white" and eraser its death, but it gets "mutilated" people, sad and poor, without meaning in their life. I would like to mention that more our societies are getting rich and more you can see poverty. More our societies are getting structured and watched and more you can see criminality, violence around you. I think that our modern societies with their insane mentalities, are only able to create monsters and we're these monsters. I believe in what is "Primitive" inside us. I think of this book of Huxley: "The best of the world" We need this inner and wild rebellion. We have no right to let us closed and destructed, and we must keep our sane rebellion, dare and say "NO" We have to stay authentic and proud, free and revolted. Today, it's almost necessary and vital. I try to do a revolted art as I'm myself alive and revolted. No, I don't want to hide our rotten wounds, our bloody diseases, our wars, our decaying brain, our neurotic mentalities....Be disgusted, and I'll feel you more normal."

As with any form of extreme expression the creation becomes fair game for being viewed as merely exploitative - with the initial shock or possibly titillation taking the emphasis away from what is really being expressed.

"Of course, I'm afraid that my work will be viewed as merely exploitative as you can say. I think that it's the common fear of every artist. Indeed, I do want to express a message and I think that I'll be very violent if someone dares to destroy or exploit this message."

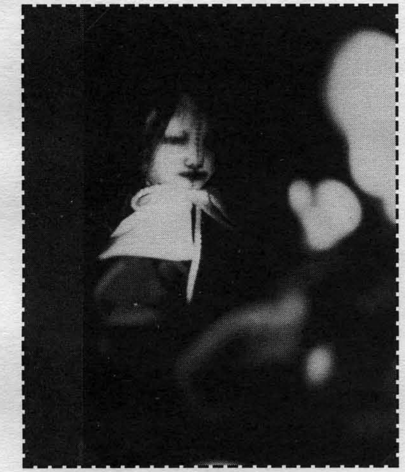


especially made
For "the Empty Quarter"
PARIS July 1995

The collaboration with Dive resulting in the aforementioned Images seemed a perfect match, their stark industrial percussive soundscape and your dark menacing imagery, but what was the history behind this union?

"About DIVE, yes indeed, the meeting was perfect in the book "Images" Our story is a piece of luck, DIVE or Dirk Ivens discovered my collages when he met Sandy Nys of "Hybryds" who got some of my images. DIVE was fond of, and asked me the permission to publish a book of my collages with his music and lyrics. He found this meeting, good, and I, too. Before "Images" he got several CDs featuring my collages on the cover. I don't have now new projects with DIVE. The last project concerns slides of my collages that are projected during his shows. Actually, I don't know if DIVE continues using these slides for his shows. Anyway if DIVE wants again to work with me, I'll be always glad to contribute to his music with my images. I got other projects with musicians like Brume, Fuze Box Machine, a compilation with the label Discordia, and a recent contribution to the label Rower Records in Denmark with Invocator, a visual contribution with Freedom In A Vacuum in Canada. In the future, a project with the label SPV in Germany, Playloud in Portugal, another project with Paul Lemos of Controlled Bleeding with Arthur Potter in the U.S.A., and another next project with Discordia in Germany. I'm very fond of the music of Lustmord, I'll enjoy a lot to work with them, too."

Another powerful visual publication is Francoise's anthology of poetry and accompanying art, only having access to the French version we're left wondering whether the scripts harbour the same darkness which appears in the artwork.



"I've stopped writing for a long time now. My poetry was mainly visual and somewhere the collages are the continuation of "L'Çcran caverneux", the only book of poetry I self-printed , and which was mainly rejected by the public. I started writing when I was about 16 years old, and then I was motivated with this surrealist method: The automatic writing. I wrote some novels in this spirit. I always believe that through art, we're able to communicate with beyond, like mediums. I made esoteric writings, which look really hermetic... When I came to Paris, I felt another atmosphere that I found more urgent to express. I wanted to do an urban writing, be like a camera travelling slowly in a big and cold city, which could be any big cities in the world, where our inner and irrational problems were mixed with our politics and social condition. Perhaps this poetry was some kind of political fiction. I don't know. My feelings were helped by our industrial culture, too. I was often listening to the music of TG, ZEV, and many others... I felt quickly concerned with this musical sensibility, and today, I continue doing my collages in the ambience of these new music. No, I don't have future written ventures. I'm more involved with the visual expression. It's not a real choice, it's because I feel more at ease when I do collages, dolls & masks. The writing seems to me, invisible and distant. I have a strong need of communication with the others, I need to touch and feel them."

Within the art of this anthology there are various images of celluloid horror (Nosferatu, Leatherface, Frankenstein) - heroes or villains? Could we possible see a future of Duvivier behind the movie camera?

"The visual medium is international and more primitive, it's quickly better felt, it's the same for music. I think that today, we have no time, our situation is tragic and it's necessary to talk directly to people and move them. Get almost a physical contact with them. The writing gets this terrible defect to have frontiers because of its mother tongue. Although I like some writings and I'll like to put images. I know a Canadian writer: Don David, who already used some of my images for his writings. See: "Long news in the short century", a US magazine of poetry, where some of his writings are next to my images. Indeed, in this book: "L'Çcran caverneux", you can see various images of celluloid horror Nosferatu, Leatherface, Frankenstein. These creatures are real for me, alive in our daily life, they're a part of our tragedy and duality. The cruelty and the cynicism of a Nosferatu condemned to rob the life of the others, bringing poverty and fear around him, the tragedy of a rejected and lonely Frankenstein. They're creatures of our night. Id like to work in these films. I already sent my images to people involved with this kind of expression, but I never received any answer. I let you know why."

But what ultimately motivates this highly creative mind?

"Death!, no more, but its mystery, too, the tragedy of our terrible loneliness in front of that, as in front of the disease and suffering, our big loneliness in front of our absurd condition. Our reality, my own experience of life, my wish to watch this suffering, look at its eyes, and experiment it. For me, my fear gets positive when I transmute it into images, dolls & masks, and then, Death gets Resurrection. I'm not interested in any exercise of style as most of the artists are involved with. I don't research harmony, too, and I feel myself better a sensibility than an "eye". I'm more interested in communication with the others, touch and feel them, stay next to our life, be a part of everyone and experiment this life. Sometimes, it happens that I can see that people are glad that I translate this reality through my images. It seems somewhere that they feel exorcised, as I feel myself."

My interpretation of art is an entity which can move you in some way, something which provoke a personal thought or emotional reaction regardless of whether it is in line which with the artist's or "critic's" definition or not, but what impression does Francoise honestly want her images to leave?

"I want my images to get people ill at ease. Destabilized. Somewhere disgusted. No, I don't feel cruel or sadist. I only think to be revolted against a false life plenty of lies, this kind of optimism full of hypocrisy which destroys our capacities and create these good and honest families getting a conformist and boring life. Life is something tragic, chaotic, powerful, violent and beautiful because it's intense, and I want to bring these strong feelings, create the real life in a society where we're continually learned to be moderated and reasoned. I want to reflect the "demon", we are, to remind this powerful storm, we get inside us, which is repressed."

Controversial art has had quite a high profile of late with the likes Damien Hirst having the press and public shocked by his representations, how is the current art medium viewed from the inside?

"I already saw this kind of expression but not enough, and I prefer to not give my opinions here, because I feel ignorant enough without a good experience of this art medium. I hope to have soon the opportunity to know better all that, and watch better this kind of expression. Anyway, I can say that England left me impressed with its alternative art medium, like the US, too."

And to end what about influences from the art world?

"Nothing or almost nothing. But everything in life influences me, everyday brings me feelings. This life is my big influence. Around 1980, I rejected my past culture, I stopped visiting galleries and salons, buying art magazines, all that was insane, but I got more interested in new music, listening often to these electronic, industrial... music, and I think they're mainly my big influences, a kind of drug, too. I feel more next to this sensibility and language in this kind of music. I'm also interested in folk and country art, more especially concerning my dolls, which are only made of fabric. Indeed I'm looking for something primitive, and I try (I try) to stay a child in life, and don't lose this childhood."

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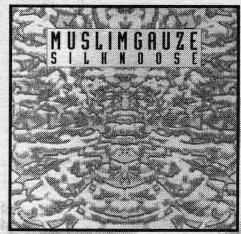
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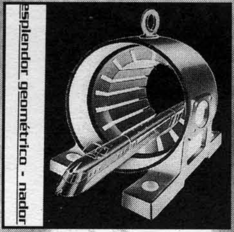
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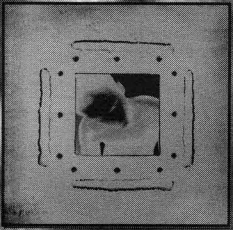

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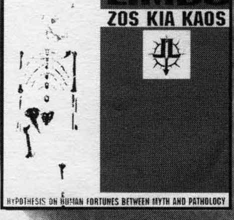
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> **"I picture myself going to the gene bank to buy more RAM for my computer."**

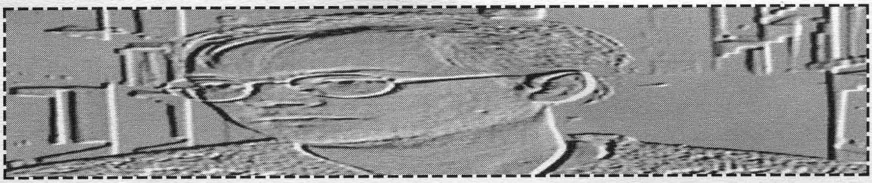
ELECTRIP-C

'Human-Computer Interaction' deadhead

Tom Christer Johansen isn't your usual technohead. His debut album on the Norwegian Beatservice label reflects this well, being a blend of techno, ambience and acoustics. Not a sign of any Arctic beats, circa Biosphere, as one might expect.

His background confirms the unusual. "I am educated from the Music Conservatory in Tromsø as a classical guitarist. I started playing the guitar at age 11, and have been involved in numerous projects ranging from heavy metal to freebag jazz. I've made some music for TV in Norway and Sweden, and I have composed music for Ice sculptures and theatre." All that snow comes in handy.

As Electrip-C he draws all these influences together and in "Peace Machinery" carries through a diverse series of tracks. "I guess that my diversity could be a drawback if I was to break Electrip-C as a 'clean' project. And in that sense that someone could or would say it lacks substance or is superficial because I don't concentrate all my energy (I have a lot) in one bag. But my feeling is that diversity triggers creativity and an omnipotent understanding of music and extends my composing ability to extreme limits."



I'd like to assure Tom that diversity is what makes electronic music interesting. Music becomes superficial when an artist lacks any form of alternative input and only creates in one style or format, and there's quite enough of that in techno...

"The "Peace Machinery" album was first released for mail order on the Internet and has received excellent critiques in Norwegian media. It's only been out in the record stores for some weeks (it's now end of June) and I don't think Sonet (Norwegian distribution company) have done a good enough job getting the album to all of the shops yet. But for me, it's really inspiring to read faxes and email from people all over the world that like my music. It is my first album as a solo artist and I am very happy to get this opportunity to spread my music."

You've talked of your background but what actually inspires you? "I love weird stuff! Yesterday there was an episode of "Picket Fences" where a cow gave birth to a perfectly healthy baby boy. A cow as a surrogate mother! If this technology is theoretically possible, just imagine what the next generation of music equipment will be like." Just a boy with your toys?! "I picture myself going to the gene bank to buy more RAM for my computer." See, told you...

"Literature and conceptual art have always been an influence to me, and I do think humour belongs in music." Now, that is unusual. "I listen to all kinds of music, but mainly electronic: Lassigue Bendthaus, Plastikman, Trevor Wishart, Biosphere, Thomas Fehlmann..."

Electrip-C is not only a studio entity, and Tom's played dates with some of the biggest names around; The Prodigy, Drum Club... To get away from playing straight from tapes, he's been known to use his training as a guitarist and utilising dancing girls, though not in the rave format as such! "Live I play guitar to add elements to my music that never will occur on records. I improvise a lot, and try to make new and odd ways to use the guitar (it doesn't sound like a guitar I've been told). Early this year I met with two lovely ladies who perform on stage. They have been to Japan and studied Butho. The concept of Butho dancing is very appealing to me because it is the complete opposite of standard 'disco' dancing with young girls in silver panties! We have some gigs in Norway, but I would love to play abroad. I just need the tickets and I'm there. Usually I have two different live set-ups. One completely ambient, and one fast and furious for the dancefloor, depending on what kind of party I'm participating at."

Tom's longing to play outside of Norway is not an arrangement he'd like to make permanent though... "I live above the Polar Circle and sometimes it's hard to keep in touch with people. But the wild nature and rough climate here gives me inspiration I wouldn't get anywhere else, it makes me want to stay. Anyway,
the musical borders are breaking down more and will continue to do so in the future. There are so many new ways to communicate around the globe that I really don't see it as a problem coming from the North Pole (almost!)." And if Tom continues to explore musical boundaries using the natural surroundings as inspiration then I hope he stays where he is too.

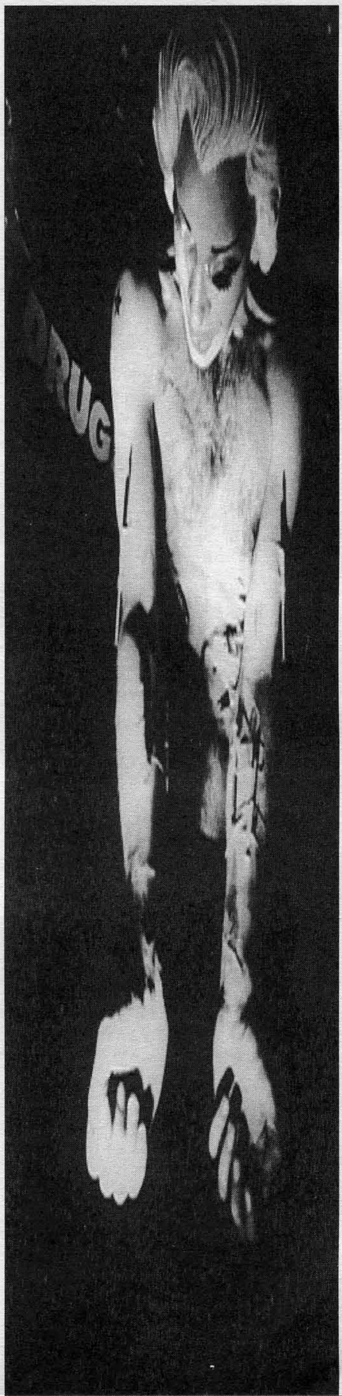
What is lurking over those ice-caps? "I'll probably release a 12" for DJ's with two tracks from "Peace Machinery" and two new tracks, as the "Automatic Sequence" EP. Geir Jenssen (aka Biosphere) took my album to Belgium and played it to some people at Apollo. They like the ambient stuff, and maybe they want to release a 12" with some of the ambient tracks. I'm constantly producing music for my next album, and my hope is also to be more present in the world scene." I hope so too...

> "We want everything to be made illegal, crime is fun"

SHEEP ON DRUGS

Beating The System Black And Blue

george



Sheep On Drugs are back and back with a vengeance, a spanking new four track single on their own spanking new label The Drug Squad. With the "Suck" EP set to corrupt [educate] the youth of today and with a track record to shock the toughest we thought it time to take the boys into custody, dust off the polygraph and take a statement...

So boys how come you're out on your own? Island's budget couldn't contain your habits or what?

We've always been out on our own. Island was a scam. We needed MONEY, but they didn't have enough.

Is The Drug Squad a long term project, have you "beaten the system" or just filling in till the next major sucker comes along?

We have beaten the System, and WE will beat it black and blue. The Drug Squad is the only COOL, truly independent record company in the UK. It will grow and grow. We will be bigger than the big boys and eventually take over the whole industry.

Musically you seem to have mellowed, still ample amounts of sleaze, but where's the more manic edge?

Just listen to 'COMA' loud, wait for the next record or see a gig...

What perversions/fetish would you recommend to our readers?

Anything that gets you going, REALLY going. Don't be afraid or ashamed. Don't tell other people about it if it's too bad. Get busy.

Still one of the most exciting live bands around creating some of the coolest dance sounds - but don't you think the "dance" club scene in London is becoming too bland again? If you could create the perfect club what could we expect?

You will be able to come to the Sheep On Drugs club in the very near future. You can expect the night of your life. Other clubs are shit and are going to get worse.

If Sheep On Drugs is the future what should we anticipate, pleasure or pain?

For every measure of pleasure, hand in hand is a measure of pain...

What would you like to see made legal/illegal in your future?

We want everything to be made illegal, crime is fun. In the Future we will be the law and what we say goes.

SOD sounds - Who are the boys aiding and abetting / known accomplices?

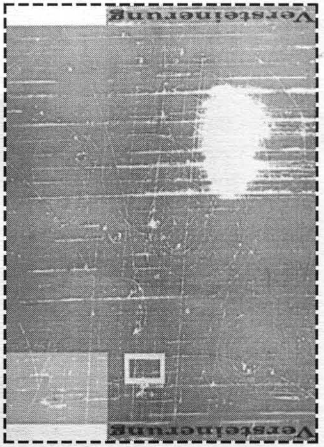
We do not listen to 'modern music', we don't like it... But we do like:

Wooden Heart - Elvis Presley
Music Music Music - Raymond Wallbank & his magical wurlitzer
Doina Din Sapinta - Transylvania Mania
Go - Go Godzilla - G.O.D.Z.I.L.L.A.
Hit the Road to Dreamland - Joe Loss
Prelude to a C Sharp Minor - Men of Brass
Theme from Kung Fu - Jack Parnell & his orchestra
Churchill in his own voice (various excerpts)
Nutter - J-Pac (SOD mix)
Ram Aur Shyam (from the original soundtrack) - Naushad & Shakeel Badayuni

“I have to admit to being a sucker for good packaging”

DOROBO RECORDS

‘The Architect’
Random Man



Based in Victoria, Australia, Dorobo Records is the brainchild of one Darrin Verhagen, the man behind the critically acclaimed Shinjuku Thief.

Set up in 1993, Dorobo’s first release came from, not surprisingly, Shinjuku Thief. As the follow up to Darrin’s debut Shinjuku release (“The Bloody Tourist”) on Extreme Records in 1992, “The Scribbler” offered a bleak introverted soundtrack to a stage production of Frank Kafka’s ‘The Trial’, a composition Darrin had written back in 1990 for a Melbourne art festival.

Coupled with a distinctly fresh design heavy packaging Dorobo arrived upon the alternative music scene with the creative grandeur of such labels as Extreme and 4AD. A standard upheld from Dorobo’s conception.

Their second release came again from Shinjuku Thief, with the malevolent darkness of “The Witch Hammer”. Based upon early medieval reports of supposed witchcraft (in particular The Malleus Malleficarum), “Witch Hammer” boasted classical Wagneresque arrangements woven in with all the horror of early Grand Guignol theatrics. Picking up passionate press across the board “Witch Hammer” was, without a doubt, one of the finest releases of ‘93.

A various artists compilation surfaced shortly thereafter, featuring such artists as Zen Paradox, Paul Shutze, Soma and Loggerhead. The compilation itself “Document 01” premiered both new and established artists combining everything from industrial ambience to tribal jungle trance, and, as always with Dorobo, never fails to impress.

Black Lung’s excellent debut album “Silent Weapons For Quite Wars” followed with a mixture of stomach churning corrosive soundbites coupled with the nightmare cinematic atmospheric reminiscent of Coil and Lustmord in full flight. Further electronic compositions appeared with Dorobo’s fifth release, an electro hallucinatory e.p. from T.C.H. (“This Crepuscular Hour”) fusing erratic percussion and shimmering washes of background sonics to great effect!

Growing from strength to strength, saw the release of a new Shinjuku Thief long player. Written specifically for the ‘Vis A Vis’ Dance Company in Canberra, the project itself “Succulent Blue Sway” displayed an amalgamation of just about all music styles, covering all bases from Funk, cheese Rock down to Industrial dance and Techno etc. Vocals and spoken word passages also debut, as Darrin notes, “”Succulent Blue Sway” is the closest cousin to our Extreme (Bloody Tourist) Debut!.”

Black Lung’s follow up album “The Depopulation Bomb” confirmed their status as a force to be reckoned with. As does Dorobo’s latest release, Alan Lamb’s mighty “Primal Image”, an immense collection of twisted atmospheric telegraph wire recordings. While this may sound relatively pretentious, it really is anything but! Naturally crafted layers of sound are brought together, conjuring up dark beautiful haunting dreamscapes of emotion, respectively similar to the guitar warpage as sculpted b the likes of Null/Main etc.

This summer sees the release of a new Black Lung e.p. “The More Confusion” and the eagerly awaited “Witch Hammer” follow-up “The Witch Hunter”, as well as the formation of a subsidiary label Iridium and new projects aplenty for 96!

So from his humble creative debut on the highly regarded Extreme label to the setting up of Dorobo, why the nightmare of setting up your own label? “It was something which basically came out of necessity” explains Darrin, “Once “The Scribbler” was completed, we shopped it around to a couple of labels. The neo-classical A&R felt it was too dark, the Industrial A&R thought it wasn’t dark enough, Extreme felt it was too far removed stylistically from “Bloody Tourist”. The only label which looked interested, was speaking of an eight month wait before issue. Impatience saw it come out independently. At that stage, there was no Dorobo masterplan it was just expedient to release the disc ourselves. By the time “The Witch Hammer” was complete, it had become obvious through the sales of “The Scribbler” that we could attain similar sales figures to the more established players without having to rely on others. The label grew from there.”

Do you have any particular manifesto behind Dorobo regarding your choice of artist?

“I have to admit, I’ve always been very suspicious of label mission statements and manifestos. Obviously, with Dorobo, releases are going to reflect my tastes first and foremost. Whilst the criteria was always fairly open, I did see the label starting to move into more trance/dance territories - something which I don't think could have been sustained successfully with the more dark ambient and experimental releases. To this end, I established Iridium - which will be focusing on the more interesting end of dance, freeing up Dorobo to concentrate on stranger territories."

Your compilation "Document 01" contains a universal selection of music, from Suntoy to DNA Lounge. Is this representative of Dorobo's outlook on sound creativity?

"I think Dorobo's outlook is probably broader than would be suggested by "Document 01", which is why that compilation was subtitled "Trance/Tribal" delineating a particular point of focus. The next release - Alan Lamb's "Primal Image" (dark ambient recordings transduced from telegraph wires) probably takes things even further both timbrally and conceptually."

Regarding Dorobo's artwork! It's very stylised, enforcing the label's identity. As do such labels as Extreme and 4AD. Do you see Dorobo in a similar light to the aforementioned?

"I have to admit to being a sucker for good packaging. Having I+T-R on line for the design has had a big impact on the look of the label. Apart from the individual feel of each release, the notion of having a series which looks good on the shelf as a block has been one which I have always found seductive - first with Realworld, then Extreme..."

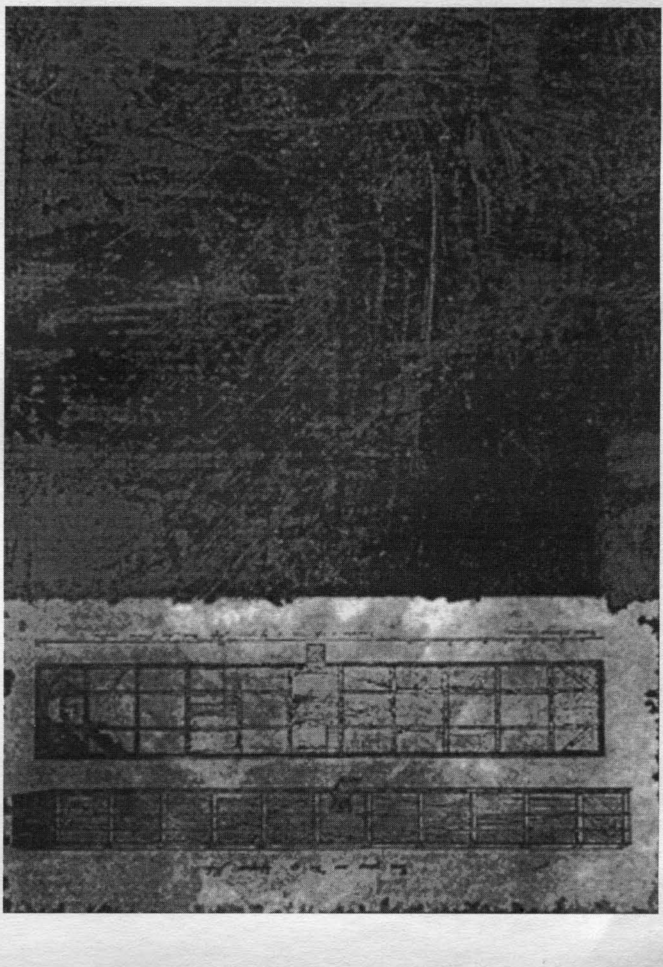
What's the lowdown with your spin-off label, Iridium? What releases are planned? You've also mentioned a sub-stream to Dorobo concentrating on scientific research studies! What will this involve?

"Iridium was established to free Dorobo up to focus again on the more dark ambient ends of music. I seemed to be getting offered more and more good dance music which I was turning down because I wanted the label to have some degree of consistency. I saw a danger of destroying any trust that had been established surrounding the label if the musical base became too broad and unfocussed. Dorobo to a certain extent, has defined itself - with an apparent focus on fairly cinematic sounding works. Iridium, on the other hand, will be freed up to put out pure dance music - although realistically, this will probably end up having the same emphasis on timbre and attitude as does Dorobo. The first release, for example, "The Depopulation Bomb" by Black Lung, is quite confronting for a dance release. Essentially, it embodies industrial attitude within a techno format - nicely smudging the genres. The follow up CD will be a compilation which is being tied off at the moment, followed by a full length release from Synapse Interrupt.

"The scientific research substream is something I've been wanting to do for a while. The first release will be the Melbourne University Department of Zoology's study of hybrid zone frog calls (the effect on the call where interspecies breeding occurs). Beyond that, I hope to issue microscopic, seismological and meteorological recordings - each accompanied by extensive information on the subject. I like the idea of taking highly specialised areas of interest, and using their timbral accompaniments as the conduit to a broader interest base. I'm still hunting, so I'm open to suggestions about any recordings and research which may be available...

"All that said, at this stage, I'd actually be interested in slowing down the label side of things a little so I can get back into the studio..."

Which can't be a bad thing for Shinjuku fans, the fruits of Darrin's rest should be with us shortly on these shores with "Witch Hunter". With Dorobo having now secured worldwide distribution (the latest being through Impetus in the UK), do you really have an excuse to pass up the jewels Dorobo have to offer!?



STICK IT IN THE JAZZ SECTION

martin archer

I'm taking over this column from Tommy MC who spent a paragraph in the last issue apologising that jazz is sometimes played on saxophone, bass and drums, and that some people who listen to it place style before content.

Well, forget that because firstly, loads of great jazz has been played with that line-up, and secondly, most people who listen to ANY sort of music place style over content, so what's new? I'm writing this column on the premise that anyone reading this magazine by definition places content first, irrespective of genre, and that anyone who's as interested in Muslimgauze as they are in Pitchshifter or Air Liquide is also going to like the CD's which I cover.

I'm not going to stick just to new releases. I'll cover anything from the last 70 years as long as it's easily available. This is because the vast majority of jazz releases today look back rather than forward, with most younger jazz musicians sticking with conservative, "tasteful" stuff which I assume their agents tell them will sell and get them gigs. I'm not interested in any of that bullshit. I'm interested in music which moves forward.

In a few years time the whole idea of jazz as a living music will be finished. Younger creative musicians mainly turned a long time ago to the other types of music featured in this magazine. Others, often those from the jazz avant - garde of the 70's, have moved their music to an area beyond jazz. Plus of course there's the whole free improvisation scene which overlaps with other parts of this magazine anyway.

So to start off I'm simply going to cover ten brilliant CDs from the 50's to the 90's.

MILES DAVIS "Kind Of Blue" [Colombia]
This is the classic of cool modern jazz, and it's almost a cliché that it's usually cited as THE definitive jazz album by mainstream fans. Well, there's no denying it, and if you have this you don't really need anything similar. I guess that it's the jazz equivalent of the first Velvets album in that sense, although aesthetically it couldn't be more different. Put together in the studio by Miles from a handful of ideas, and very little (as usual) instruction to the players, it went totally against the trend in jazz at the time by never rising beyond mid - tempo and keeping the emotions cool and inward looking, sophisticated and sarcastic - the opening cut 'So What?' typifies Miles' fuck you attitude. Of course, every note of the thing is absolutely perfect, and like ambient it'll either change the way you think about music, or you won't even notice it's on.

CHARLES MINGUS "Blues And Roots" [Atlantic]
Mingus was a volatile and emotional man whose ambitions occasionally ran ahead of his ability to follow through. But this record, made in 1957, is as raw as it comes, a searing collection of intense riff - based blues and gospel pieces. Each track starts tense and gets tenser, solos are short and to the point, and the whole lot is kicked along by the leader's bass. A lot of the excitement and spontaneity comes from Mingus making his musicians learn their parts by ear, rather than by writing anything down. Unsophisticated, the direct opposite of cool, and totally essential.

ORNETTE COLEMAN "The Shape Of Jazz To Come" [Atlantic]
The jazz establishment truly hated Ornette's music at the period (late 50's) when this record was released. All the usual crap was wheeled out which invariably greets anything new - he can't play in tune, he's crazy, he hasn't paid his dues, the tunes are ugly, it doesn't swing etc. True, the music is radical - for the first time in jazz Ornettes' group (sax, trumpet, bass, drums) simply got rid of fixed keys, chords, and regular bar length But what makes the music so appealing (and why it's difficult to imagine in 1995 what all the panic was about) is that Ornette turned his group into a single interactive melody machine. The freedom was a simple concept - all you needed to play were some brilliant tunes and a genius for listening and co-operating. Needless to say, a lot of people felt very threatened by this simplicity. The future started here.

SUN RA "The Magic City" [Evidence]
The casual browser can rightly be alarmed at the seemingly endless array of Sun Ra CD's on offer, and the quality can indeed be variable. This is a good place to start. This was probably recorded in the early 60's, although you wouldn't guess it - it could have been made yesterday. Sun Ra was using a variety of primitive electronic keyboards as an integral part of his sound by this time, and this CD represents that side of his music well via a spooky sounding "clavioline". This CD also is a good example of the way Ra organised his big band without using any written material. The two long tracks here are built in contrasting blocks of

sound, where one sonic event lasts for a while, then gives way to the next. He constantly breaks the group down into a series of unlikely sub - groups, providing an interesting large scale structure within which improvisation provides all the fine detail. The two short tracks which close the record could almost be outtakes from "Another Green World".

JOHN COLTRANE "Interstellar Space" [Impulse]

I must admit to not being a great Coltrane fan. Though his (too great) influence on subsequent players is undeniable, I find him too earnest and indigestible. However this album, the last he made before his death in 1967, sees him at the point where he'd freed himself up to a new level, and consists simply of a set of minimal tunes plus lengthy improvisations for duo of saxophone and drums. All you can say about this record is that it's great playing and great interaction, as good as it can get, and that this should have been a starting point rather than the end.

MILES DAVIS "Bitches Brew" [Colombia]

By the time Miles recorded this in 1970 he'd already left much of his jazz audience behind an moved into an area which no-one else has matched. This record anticipates electronica in that (apart from the leader's solos) it's totally about rhythm, mood and texture. The sound is rich and detailed, like a rainforest, with multiple electric pianos and clipped guitar floating above a bed of restrained but funked out drumming, while basses, percussion and bass clarinet weave through the undergrowth. Way above this Miles' trumpet blows some of the most powerfully spiked music ever cut, his long solos often beginning with a handful of notes, weary, resigned, angry, before building up to an unbearable intensity. The whole lot is constructed from studio jams, with some amazing tape editing revealing the final structures. Mysterious, powerful and essential, you can hear this record 1,000 times and still be surprised. The CD remaster is immaculate.

ANTHONY BRAXTON "Quartet (London) 1985" [LEO]

Influenced equally by Stockhausen and cool 50's jazz, Braxton has created a large body of recordings over the last 25 years which have helped redefine what a (black) jazz musician is "allowed" to do by the music establishment. For years Braxton's recordings were limited (ha!) to small group recordings which at least approximated jazz, but more recently he's been able to get releases for his abstract and orchestral work. This comes from his 1985 UK tour, and musically is mid - way between the two. The line -up is conventional sax, piano, bass and drums, but the musical ideas are at breakthrough level -instead of playing tunes and solos, Braxton places improvisation and composition side by side all the time by having the group play music from more than one composition simultaneously. For example, what sounds like a piano solo might actually be the string part from an orchestral work, while bass and drums play a graphic score underneath, while Braxton alternates improvisation with a written solo over the top. Of course, this presents no listening problems to anyone who likes Nine Inch Nails or God is my Co - pilot (who incorporate a similar multi - layered approach), although your average jazz fan won't understand or like this at all.

HENRY THREADGILL / VERY VERY CIRCUS "Too Much Sugar For A Dime" [Axiom]

In contrast to the pathetic backward looking generation of younger players, saxophonist and composer Threadgill, who was a champion of the 70's avant - garde jazz, has simply moved on to a unique beyond jazz music. The line -up of this group is bizarre - sax, French horn, two guitars, two tubas (!) and drums. Only Threadgill can make this happen. The overall sound is almost Latin, but much more complex and aggressive. The two tubas are funkier than my 303, and lock in as part of a driving rhythm machine which underpins fierce soloing which contrast with the almost old - timey tunes, and complex twists in the structures. Variety comes via occasional strings and voices, and one track features an amazing singing drum choir. Threadgill shows here how to be forward and still remain unpretentious and accessible. This may be harder to get than some of the others - mine came from Rough Trade mail order. Produced by Bill Laswell, incidentally.

EDWARD VESALA "Nordic Gallery" [ECM]

Like Threadgill, Finnish drummer and composer Vesala is hardly a household name, but again he's a musician who's left jazz behind by creating his own concept. His series of records for ECM (all brilliant) genuinely aren't like anything else. It's large group music which has broken free from the African - American continuum, and simply gone off to a place of it's own where searing guitar, taped and live voices, blooping analogue synths, eccentric MOR accordions all meet within a band sound defined by regular, simple drumming, and a large horn section which mostly dispenses with solos in favour of aggressive, drawn - out written parts which, like Mingus, the players commit to memory. The occasional icy ballad takes the pace down. This sounds, on paper, like a mess, but the overriding impression is of a whole band with a single vision, simply making brilliant music - somehow it all makes sense. Vesala has taken up where Sun Ra left off.

EVAN PARKER "50th Birthday Concert" [LEO]
Evan is without doubt making some of the best saxophone music around today, just as he's been doing since he cut his first records 25 years ago. Age hasn't mellowed his style, although in recent years he's allowed a little more jazziness to appear (he's primarily associated with free improvisation) and shifted from mainly soprano saxophone to the warmer and throatier tenor. This is an astonishing double CD which features a different trio on each disk, both long-standing performing groups. All the music is improvised, and the quickfire interaction between the players obviously comes from years of working together on a whole new language for music. This is difficult and demanding listening for a newcomer to to this style, and all the more reason for checking it out. Forget the crap, the real music starts here.

[Most of these discs should be stocked at good stores, or those with a decent-sized Jazz section. LEO titles are available from LEO, THE COTTAGE, GANERLEY HILL, LONDON SE19 2AA, UK]

Martin Archer has been involved in creative music since 1980, initially in jazz and free improvisation, but since 1993 has worked mainly with electronics as part of Transient v Resident. He runs the Sheffield based DISCUS label.

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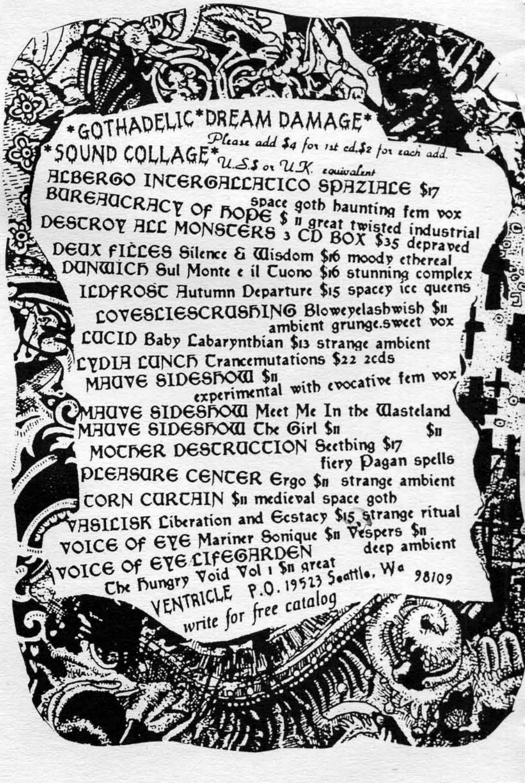

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“At present we’re working on a new loft conversion for the pigeons...”

‘Flighty Buggers’

deadhead

OPIK

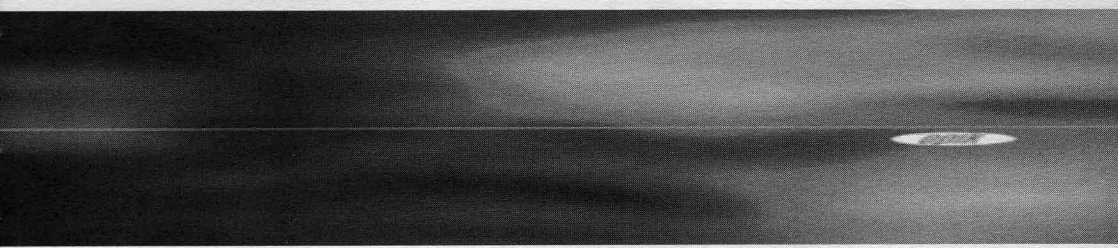
Finding out that OPIK’s “Clause 58” debut album isn’t actually being released on the Concrete label which I was thinking of (“Funky Alternatives”, etc.), but actually on an offshoot of Deconstruction puts things into perspective. It’s too good a techno album to be released on the Funkies’ label! That statement is not meant as derogatory, but I have the feeling that this three-piece from that great musical heritage town of Hull will prove to be of much more worth than anything the underground can give them.

Already having one hit on the club circuit a couple of years ago, the album looks set to follow with its richly rounded, and superfluously bubbling fluidity. With stated musical interests lying well outside of the current dance scenes (Chrome, Severed Heads), I contacted them briefly over the wires, and asked about their coming together.

“As friends we spent years collecting and listening to a diverse array of music and when the technology of samplers and sequencers came along it enabled us to take part in what had previously been exclusive to musicians - making music. None of us could play an instrument or had any technical music knowledge but we felt we knew what sounded good.

“Our musical interests spread much wider and further back than the techno/dance scene. Those experimental bands like 400 Blows and 23 Skidoo never seem to get fully recognised when the history of techno music is considered but they were a vital part of its development. They were the first to take up new technology and mash up other peoples sounds to incorporate in their music. They were truly experimental and that spirit seems to have died. Much of the music scene today is people trying to imitate each other or do flavour of the month.” Reasoning behind making their music beyond just being danceable, and clearly stating that techno has its roots firmly in the electronic/industrial scenes. I’ve been saying that all along, so it’s good to hear others reaffirming. “We all started listening to music before we started dancing to it.” Some of us still only listen, even if it is danceable!

So, how will Opik be dealt with? On both levels as the music was intended or looked upon blindly by the clubs? “Ask the punter”. OK... Why’s it taken so long since the single ‘Feel Yourself’ was a hit some two years ago, and the release of the album? “You’ll have to ask Deconstruction about that.” Don’t think I’ll bother thanks! “The album has been finished for over a year but for some reason every decision that is made there has to go through three board meetings, be turned into flow charts and signed in triplicate. Such is the nature of the industry.” No change there then.



After playing the Phoenix festival and hopefully gaining a new audience, what’s new? “At present we’re working on a new loft conversion for the pigeons, and an album for the sparrows.” Oh god, a band with a sense of humour...

TechnoFILE
Abusing Technology

roger james brown

When D'head asked me to sling some words about technology into a column for the readers of MFTEQ it coincided with a topic currently under discussion in my little corner of techno, WHAT IS TECHNOLOGY? If we take the dictionary definition as a starting point, mine defines technology as: "the application of practical solutions to areas of commerce or industry." Well, music qualifies as both commerce and industry, the latter obviously applies if you are Solar Enemy but music is industry in the sense of individuals being busy and, if we wish to make a living at it then music becomes commerce. A commerce of ideas as well, the tradition of music as a folk tradition is well documented and it is fascinating to observe the emergence of similar musical forms and statements on a global scale, both throughout history and in our present times. In the field of musical technology, Bob Moog observed that the ideas he and others were developing when they originated substractive synthesis arose simultaneously in the minds of individuals across continents.

But what about this bit that defines technology as the application of practical solutions to a task? Doesn't that sound a bit dry, a bit removed from the creative activity that is music making? It does and if we look at the first person to use a tool to make music, the caveman banging a bone on the skull of his victim wasn't he really doing something far more subversive, wasn't he abusing technology? The idea of banging or pounding one thing on another surely arose out of a need to break open skulls and ribcages to access meat or to grind grain, not to make an unholy noise. Surely it was the something inside of man that led him to bang things together and enjoy the racket he was making.

Klaus Schülze of Tangerine dream once commented that "a violin does not grow on a tree either" to emphasise the point that technology is not confined to synths and computers, any machine for making music is a piece of technology. I would take that further and it is the view of this column that it is only when musicians take the technology offered to them and abuse it that true creativity arises. The first rock'n'roll musicians cranked up their amps beyond the limits the makers had originally devised and the resulting aggressive sound, never heard before, transformed R'N'B into a new musical form, Rock'N'Roll. Similarly the first of us who got our hands on synths, samplers and drum machines and pushed them beyond the limits their manufacturers intended created house and techno music. Similarly, DJ's pumping up the sub bass on systems designed to eliminate bass rumble made the whole thing pump and a new musical form was born.

Over the coming months I'll be looking at different ways of abusing technology. It may be computers, synths and samplers or it may be all about ripping the guts out of a pair of headphones and making a drum mike out of it. Whatever it is it will be all about abusing a piece of technology to achieve a new noise to play with. I'd like this column to become a forum for the discussion of the uses and abuses of technology in music making and welcome anyones hints and tips for abusing a particular machine that produces some mad effect they think is cool. Send your ideas to Roger James Brown at MFTEQ.

Finland

Information Sheet

The Finns moved into what is now Finland in about 100 AD, absorbing the nomadic Lapps and the earlier Germanic people in the region. Part of the Kingdom of Sweden until 1808, Finland was attacked by Russia in 1809 and was incorporated into Russia in the same year. Finland declared independence in 1917, Prince Frederick Charles of Hesse was elected king in 1918 and in 1919 a republican constitution was established. Russia attacked again in 1939, the Winter War, and in the Continuation War of 1941-44, finland had to concede most of Karelia and pay heavy war indemnities. The final peace treaty was signed in Paris in 1947. In the post-war period the Soviet union was a major trading partner. The recent collapse of the USSR led to serious economic damage to Finland as product development was needed to build up export in the West and bankruptcies occurred in the interim.

A quarter of Finland lies north of the Arctic circle though the combined influence of the baltic, 100,000 inland lakes and the Gulf Stream makes the climate milder than its northern position would imply. Forests are Finland's 'green gold' and Lapland's fell region is an attraction for Finns and foreign tourists alike.

Some Vital Statistics

Total area of Finland	338,000 Sq Km (GB = 244,000 Sq Km)
Land Area	305,593 Sq Km
	69% forest, 10% water, 8% cultivated land
Population in 1900	2.65 million
Population in 1992	5.05 million (GB = 57.4 million)
Population in Helsinki	0.5 million
Population in Jyväskylä	67,000
Foreigners in Finland in 1991	37,000 - from the former Soviet Union, Russia, Estonia, Sweden, Somalia, USA, UK, Germany, Vietnam
97 cities	63% of the population live in cities
Twelve counties	
Two official languages	Finnish & Swedish
Main religions	Lutherian & Orthodox
Higher education	18 universities & academic institutions, 3 art academies
Car ownership 1992	2,000,000
Currency	100 penniä = 1 markka
Temperature range	17.0 centigrade, July, Helsinki, 1993
	-10.4 centigrade, December, Sodyankylä Lapland, 1993
Arable farms over 1 hectare	200,000, 1991
Arable farms from 50-100 hectares	4500
Arable farms over 100 hectares	500
Industry by value of production 1992	main sectors are metal products, food/drink, paper products
Principal foreign trade with	Germany, Sweden, Great Britain, 1992
Main exports	the steel and paper industries form 60% of finland's exports
Female suffrage	1906 - the first country in Europe to give women the vote
	New Zealand was the first in the world
Political & electorial system	republic, multi-party, proportional representation
Unemployment rate - 1994	20%
Youth unemployment - 1993	33.3%
17-18% of Govt Budget spent on	education, research and cultural resources

Some Vital Music

Artist	**Panasonic**
New album	"Vakio"
Formats	CD / Ltd Vinyl (4 x 10")
Availability	Out Now
Released by	Sähkö Recordings in conjunctiuon with Blast First
Catalogue number	BFFP118
Distribution	RTM/Disc

Some Vital Dates

September	Sunday 24th	DJ @ The Breakfast Club, Silverfish, London
	Tuesday 26th	Play & DJ @ "Jazznology"/Sam Fays, Nottingham
	Wednesday 27th	Play @ The 5th Man – Disobey Night with Non, C.P.Lee, Manchester
	Thursday 28th	DJ & play on Kiss F.M. (Paul Thomas), London
	Friday 29th	Play @ U.L.U. – Disobey Night with Non, Bruce Gilbert, London
October	Tuesday 3rd	DJ @ Electric Lounge, ICA, London

BLAST FIRST

“er - don’t know”

HI-RYZE

‘Update - End 7/95’

downloaded by s. brundle

Dave Campbell, a music technician/engineer working to the finest detail in electronic music today, has been manipulating sound in this field for well over a decade. His pioneering work in Synthetic Systems Music can be heard on his recent album for G.P.R. entitled “Sodium”. See the end of this article for more references to his substantial archive of released material.

Current projects/pseudonyms:

Currently recording as Hi-Ryze on G.P.R., KIBU on Rising High (although I’m not sure whether I will be recording any more stuff for them), and Scorpio - my Jungle project with Tom Withers - which comes out on Deep Red Records in Ipswich. That’s all for now, ‘though I’ve been approached by a new label just starting out which I can’t really discuss at the moment...

Most essential piece of music technology to Dave Campbell:

It has to be the Atari computer sequencers; without them, Techno music would be different and Jungle would not exist. However, I believe that none of the early people, in Detroit for example, used computers. I think that the only way to play back the cut-up breaks (in Jungle) is on a computer sequencer - and more specifically ‘Cubase’. What I am saying is that ‘Cubase’ begat Jungle (maybe). Anyway, back to the question as to why the sequencer is essential to the development of my music. The reason is that in order to do the music I want to do - and that is multi-layered, complex, synthetic, funky, systems music - I have to use a machine to fire the notes. Otherwise, I’d need a whole load of people all able to play like the Philip Glass Ensemble and a massive studio, tons of money to pay everyone and also I’d have to be a really shit-hot keyboard player myself. The computer takes care of all of this for under £500!

Do any of your peers influence you to create in a specific way, or would you say your compositional style is original?

I am influenced by my peers in many ways. Some of them who I think are very good influence me to produce a track which I like to listen to, and my friends like to listen to as much as stuff by other people. Being aware of what other people are doing is important I think, ‘cause often you can find out what music and sounds NOT to use. I want my Hi-Ryze stuff to sound different to all the other records. I feel originality is important; every musician should be trying to carve their own niche or style. Trouble when someone comes up with a good enough “niche” - loads of other people want to have a go as well.

About your recent work with Jungle-style rhythms & textures:

Well, that came about through my friend Duncan Busto who writes the Jungle review column for ‘Echoes’. He is an old friend of mine from Ipswich who used to be in our ‘Raving Posse’. When the big split happened with Hardcore and Techno, I got into the synths and drum machines and he got into samples and breaks and returned to Ipswich to work in a record shop specialising in Hardcore. I used to go back to Ipswich and hang around in the shop slagging off all of the tunes. More and more of my friends had been getting into the breakbeat stuff and I always kept half an ear on it as well. I don’t know if it’s me that’s changed or the music, but it seemed that at the beginning of ‘94 it began to improve. I was hearing more stuff I liked. The programming became more and more intricate. When it got to the stage where I was hearing breaks and asking “How do they do that?”, I knew that I wanted to learn.

Luckily, I met Tom Withers who used to drum in the “Skate Punk” band The Stupids. He lived in Ipswich as well and had been making Jungle for a while. I offered him the use of my studio so I could learn about breaks. So far, we’ve done about five tunes, two of which are coming out on the previously mentioned Ipswich label ‘Deep Red’, under the artist name ‘Scorpio’.

You ask me what I can offer that others can’t in this area of music. Well, I don’t know. It’s not really for me to say. It is up to the listener and purchaser to decide if they like a track and if it has anything to offer. Of course, as the people who wrote the stuff, we like what we do and think it’s KICKIN’, but then again, I don’t think we would offer the music to anyone if we didn’t.

What plans do you have for developing the visual aspects of your work, if any?

I currently have no plans - I realise that we are entering the arena of C.D. Rom and stuff, where pictures and graphics are a vital piece of the product, but I have been spending all of my time coming to grips with the ‘Universe of Music’. I feel as if I’m just scratching the surface here, and that in some ways the best music puts pictures in your head which may differ from person to person. So any tying down to specific images is in some ways a restriction.

How can you be contacted if necessary?

er - don’t know.

HYPNOTISM

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Extractor:

CB=chris billington, DD=deadhead, DM=dangermouse, GE=george, R-M=rowan morrison, RM=random man, SJ=stefan jaworzyn, SS=scrag sialoid, VL=veil

+N
Plane
[Fax CDalbum]
Possibly THE biggest experimental label in the world today, certainly one of the only ones tied in with the trendy techno/ambient world, and anyone who can continue to release something independently every fortnight gets my vote of worthiness. So, who more deserving to be on such a label as Mr. Maximum Output himself Atom Heart. This time with Victor Sol as +N, a duo who produced one hell of an album, "ex.s" on Geometrik. Unlike that album, "Plane" follows a more direct route through sedated trance waters. Mellow is not the right word, but this is so relaxing, hardly ever reaching beyond a surface plane. Long, drawn out pieces flow into one, catching air and cruising. The ultimate drift album.
DD
[Fax: +49 69 450464]

13:13
[Union Mill Recordings CDalbum]
From newly formed Union Mill Recordings comes this debut album from Birmingham's 13:13. Coming across as a Laswell inspired Helmet set-up, 13:13 create a wall of experimental guitar fused dub along the lines of New Kinds "Tortoise". From the quiet apocalypse of Non metal feedback of 'Exorcisms' to the sweet oxygen dub of 'White Sands" up to the hilt with the hardcore grind of 'Mimas', 13:13 are a guaranteed experience, all wrapped up in some seriously stylish packaging.
RM
[Union Mill Recordings, 74 Arundel Road, Hollywood, Birmingham B14 5UE, UK]

16 VOLT
Skin
Wisdom
[Off Beat CDalbums]
"Wisdom" is produced by David Ogilvie and Fluffy Auerbach and keeps pretty close to the acceptable formula. It's all here distorted vocals, heavy, heavy percussion, cut-ups and samples etc etc. - yes the world and its mother want to be Skinny Puppy, official. "Skin", all pretty much the same but more thrashy obligatory Skinny Puppy re-mix too - of course.
GE
[Off Beat, Horster Strasse 27, 45897 Gelsenkirchen-Buer, Germany]

70 GWEN PARTY
John Peel Sessions 1,2,3 & 4
[Snape Records CDalbum]
Yep, a CD from those wonderful anti-ists, Victor N'Dip and co. Not before time, from this anti-vinyl, shiny silver fetishist's point of view. Though, knowing Vic's (good) reasons for the lack of compacts in the past I totally understand where he's coming from. This being on CD is a case of HAVING to play the industry game. No matter how independent one feels they are, logistics have to be realised, and the realisation is that if you don't release on CD; (i) products won't reach the shops, and (ii) it's the only way of raking back enough bucks to make the next... (This of course, is untrue where much dance music is concerned in this country, and due to bloody DJ's if a label doesn't release on vinyl; (i) they won't reach the dance shops, and (ii) won't sell much product in the UK) Well, I digress, kind of - it's all relevant you know - 70 Gwen Party are one of the only bands over here doing something which cannot be put into a neat little box (something else which goes against them in the media circus). Over 19 tracks here I just can't place the sounds against a particular style. Some tracks are tuneful, some play around with noisy structures, others riff off at tangents, bloody hell, you have to hear it... Pop music with a hearty edge, or experimental waxings, call this what you will, just go out and BUY the thing. I'll only offer one small comparison and that's to Foreheads In A Fishtank's pleasing doodles. Vic, as usual, offers something to read as well while you take in this monster, and top marks go to his praise of the BBC, which gets much more stick than it deserves. He's right, just take a peak at their musical archives, how many bands do you possess in your collection who've been aired on the likes of Peelie? God bless John, and god bless Victor too. This has been an unashamed infommercial for the John Peel Sessions' CD by 70 Gwen Party.
DD
[Snape Records, PO Box 221, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 3ND, UK]

46,000 FIBRES
Emanates
[MTB Recordings CDalbum]
I don't know why I feel like apologising, but I'm sorry to say I don't like this at all... Maybe it's because these guys *seem* to be coming from the right place - sort of improvised post-Kraut noise-rock (Jesus, aren't these little gift tags getting beyond a joke?) - but the improvised post-Kraut noise-rock they're producing is sadly very bad indeed. The music's static and unadventurous, the pieces are repetitive and predictable - people mess with synths/funny stuff and make gloopy ploops and tweeps, a simplistic rhythm starts up, carries on for a while, stops, and the vloops & gloops begin again. Sometimes there are no rhythms, just a multitude of gloops...The recordings are atrocious too: thin and compressed-sounding with no body, presence or sonic density (some of these problems could have been rectified by decent CD mastering)... And finally, 46,000 Fibres sound so similar to a group whose music I find intolerable that if I didn't know better I'd swear I was listening to a Put Put bootleg cassette... Whatever, I'd sure like to get a few samples (no, not the kind on the Bjork album) of whatever made Mr Scanner claim he "saw the shadowy figure of Sun Ra dancing with Elvis Presley over the mixing desk the night they mastered the album". Nutso! 46,000 Fibres think the concept of the improvising 'rock' band is still valid - I'd check its sell-by date. Listen to the Cul de Sac CD if you want to hear how this type of music *should* sound...
SJ
[MTB Recordings, 76 Sullivan Court, Fulham, London, SW6 3DB, UK]

A GUY CALLED GERALD
Black Secret Technology
[Juice Box CDalbum]
Jungle schmungle - this so discofied, mainstream smooth and user friendly that you could heap copies of it on kittens in a water barrel and they'd probably meow for more - even heard at a preposterous volume it wouldn't rouse a gin-sozzled crackbaggy from her pee-britches slumber. I fail to see how Mr Simpson can be punted as pushing the frontiers of jungle: he may be a technical genius/technological marvel but his music's so diluted, smoochy and soulful it makes me feel like I've lapsed into a diabetic coma. Whenever an interesting track commences the inevitable vocals (usually crooning/keening/female) reduce it to pure schmaltz, 'Cyberjazz' being about the notable exception. A major disappointment, and I can't help but perceive it as another nail in the commercialization coffin of what was probably the most alien and alienating form of music to evolve in years (not to

mention a massive mental abnormality on the part of anyone heralding its importance as some sort of breakthrough...).
SJ
[NO ADDRESS LISTED]

A MOUSE ORCHESTRA
A Lump in Your Throat
[Robot Records 7"]
Not at all what I'd expect from a collaboration between David Jackman and Christoph Heeman: two sides of rhythmic, discreet (and very musical) tinkly bonk derived mainly from what sounds like prepared piano and vibes with (maybe) ultra low key electronics whisperings in the background. Most pleasant, and quite a surprise; needs to be heard a few times before it really starts to 'sink in'. Great Jackman cover art.
SJ
[Robot Records, PO Box 120004, San Antonio, TX 78212, USA]

A SACRIS
[A Sacris CDalbum]
Began really well, really spooky acoustic guitar, dark synth and childrens' shouts in the distance, all very atmospheric. Two minutes in it all metamorphs into a bad drum and bass disaster area, reminiscent of The Cure "Faith" album, all those long years ago and the spotter censors do pick up on the odd very similar Cure riffs. No doubt your average French gotho type keeps himself in a nicely depressed state to this sort of thing, and no bloody wonder, another reason for tighter border controls.
DM
[NO ADDRESS LISTED]

A SPELL INSIDE
Return to Grey
[Discordia CDalbum]
Ten or fifteen years ago this could have been almost interesting - moody sounds - wobbly lyrics but basically this sad and sorry planet has to suffer one Depeche Mode - we certainly don't need or deserve another. A spell inside is what these sad Germans deserve. Good-bye boys...
GE
[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

ABNER MALATY
Glide EP
[Drone Records 7"]
Debut vinyl release from this ridiculously-unknown US recording artist, who's been 'in circulation' since about 1986. 'Glide' features around 18 glorious minutes of dynamic space-music which is exceptionally mind-jarring. A real primaeval swamp of twisted sounds, mutating from thickly-layered, ambient soundscapes to rhythmic loopings of percussion and noise, all of which is guaranteed to whet your appetite for more of the same. On smurf-blue vinyl and in a hand painted sleeve too. A single I've played over and over - very pleasing indeed.
VL
[Drone Records, c/o Stefan Knappe, Loningstrasse 15, 25195 Bremen, Germany]

ABSCESS
In Your Mind
[Glasnost CDalbum]

Depeche Mode, Fortification 55, Skinny Puppy etc., etc. It's all here, thick bass synth drones, plinky-plonky synth tones, Euro-art gloomy vocals - but Abscess are never really bursting out with enthusiasm. Here is yet another band simply going through the motions, bereft of any vitality. Abscess in your mind? I think not, more a pimple in a planetful of talent - be well advised to steer clear.
CB
[Glasnost, Glockengiesserwall 17, D-20095 Hamburg, Germany]

ACTUS
Das Unbenennbare
[Discordia CDalbum]
It's been a long time since I've heard anything of this Hungarian troupe. "Das Unbenennbare" rekindles the passionate flame, but it doesn't shine so brightly. Somehow their music seems deadened now, lacking the majestic power of before. These tracks are filled with an archaic feel but they've been updated through the use of far too much electronics. Time to re-release "... Empire...".
DD
[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

ADULT FANTASIES
The No-Sleep Feeling
[Sub Rosa CDalbum]
What struck me immediately from this set, was the resemblance to Nick Cave. Perhaps he would be performing songs by Adult Fantasies if he hadn't been born within The Birthday Party? "The No-Sleep Feeling" is a collection of alternative pop songs, by a Belgian duo, who contain essential elements, such as melody, richness and above all simplicity. These aren't 'nice' as such but completely listenable. Slow orchestrations which actually move the listener. Musically the sounds are a less bitter Tom Waits, and vocally, a subdued Cave or Lou Reed. A debut and a great one at that, from a label who are illuminating a new diversity with the projects they're working with. Damn fine.
DD
[Sub Rosa, PO Box 808, CM 1000 Brussels, Belgium]

AERIAL SERVICE AREA 2
150 G Space Weight
[Fax CDalbum]
This is Sol and Heyduck in weightless space mode. A virtual silent running through the stars with only the odd transmission, or surface noise to keep it moving. Tense, but without too much substance. Float on...
DD
[Fax: +49 69 450464]

AGHAST
Hexeri im Zweilicht der Finsternis
[Cold Meat Industry CDalbum]
From Black Metal inspirations comes this genuinely sinister disc of morbid atmospheres. Starkly ambient tones chill as distant, non-human vocals swell the darkness which envelops. The makers of this utterly black music are both witches, and the vocals are spoken through the microphone of metal band Mayhem's ex-vocalist who committed suicide, giving it that authentic deathly touch. One of Satan's shiny discs without a doubt.
DD
[Cold Meat Industry, PO Box 1881, 581 17 Linkoping, Sweden]

AIRWAVES
Ambient Tracks
[Opcion Sonica CDalbum]
Profound statements are made here; a-music is not New Age, nor boring, and is what you hear when you are not listening. So how does that work? So I must be reviewing the stuff I'm not listening to... Er, shit, I think I need some drugs... My guess is that Airwaves are in fact a bunch of hippy space cadets, a few volts short of their final demand. Barking loons or not Airwaves are quite palatable, though "Ambient" is very debatable, neither having the added dimension such recordings would supply, nor the depth, but it is good quality chill-out. Some extremely cool sounds float about Some trax having a slight acid trance feel don't really help to make this CD one large portioned trip that I feel such albums should be. Comparisons for those interested, maybe AFX's Polygon Window, or maybe Autechre's lessor experimental stuff.
DM
[Opcion Sonica, Tamaulipas # 125-23, Col. Condensa, Mexico D.F., C.P. 06140]

ALBOTH!
Yorn
[Sub/Mission CDmini-album]

Always one of the best PDCD bands, and now licensed to Italy's Sub/Mission label. These 4-tracks show their free-form genius. Slight comparison to The Young Gods is inevitable (Alboth! are from Switzerland), but the base of this four-piece lies in a more jazzier mode - though, if you're afraid by that statement, let me calm you by explaining that instruments used are drums, bass, piano, samples and a raged voice. The band has even put together a 'Recycled Techno Mix' of 'Liebefeld', but it's not exactly what you'd necessarily relate to techno! More like God in fact, or the stuff which the Swiss Vision label was putting out in the early Nineties. Alboth! are much underrated by many, I can't wait for the next full album.

DD

[Sub/Mission, Via Turati 22/28, I-50136 Firenze, Italy]

ALIEN FAKTOR
Abduction
[Decibel CDalbum]

Hardbeat isn't fairly represented these days by good crafting, but this album has been excellently put together by Alien Faktor. Thomas Muschitz is responsible for this superb set of diverse electronic dance and soundscapes. Heavily influenced by film, the instrumentals are an immersive collection of sounds and snatched source material. Vocally, he's hardly the best in the world, but has a soft uttering which sets the tone perfectly. Fifteen tracks definitely worth hooking up with.

DD

[Decibel, 17125C W. Bluemound Rd. #22, Milwaukee, WI 53008-0949, USA]

ALIEN SEX FIEND
Inferno
[Anagram Records CDalbum]

ASF's latest is a soundtrack to the Ocean Software computer game of the same name. As opposed to the usual techno-goth fair, "Inferno" sees ASF in ambient techno territory and quite competant it is too. There are few surprises, you've heard it all before, but with Japan buying up soundtrack music to videogames by the shit load, you can see the reason behind Ocean's thinking. Best track has to be Youth's reworking of the title track, but again.., it's nothing new.

RM

[Anagram Records, Bishops Park House, 25/29 Fulham High Street, London SW6 3JH, UK]

ALLERSEELEN
Cruor
[Aorta CDalbum]

Well I can't find any info on these chaps, beyond that "Cruor" is an anthology of recordings made between 1989 and 1993, and they're probably Austrian - or German. That put aside, this review was sounding good in my head, until whilst delving into past issues I clocked a review of Autopsia's "Crystal Power" (#10) - all pretty apt here.

Opening track 'Flammel Empor', is very compatible with Numb's first and finest. After that it all starts getting macabre, each instrument being slowly tortured to full effect, accompanied by varying beat manipulations; drums, sheets and other metal objects, conjuring all manner of images, medieval battle field stand off's, future apocalyptic structural decay, plague ridden cities, and all sorts of other mean nasty things. Everything the goth genre should have been. Allerseelen = class.

DM

ALLERSEELEN
GOTOS=KALÀNDA

ALLERSEELEN
Goto's = Kalana
[Aorta CDalbum]

Oh you lucky mortals, a second album from these geezers. 12 tracks based on spiritual odes written by Austrian poet and runes officiate Karl Maria Wiligut 1866 - 1946 - no I ain't heard of him either. Slightly more up tempo than "Cruor" and more vocal translation supplied, but doesn't lose any of the sinister edge, crash, bang, wallop and all manner of saddo annoying noises. Fucking pukker.

DM

[Aorta, PO Box 778, A-1011 Vienna, Austria]

AMENONENGURT
Wo Die Ebenen Geglattet Sind
[Dom Elchklang CDalbum]

Dunno who these two gents are, but they look like the wacky Weathermen - don't sound like them though. Their spirit is obviously lying somewhere between Industrial noise, the Avant-Garde and pop music. Vocal distortion and primal screams are fully in evidence, though all the while these are 'songs' they're trying to 'sing', in German. Musically there's a shitload of percussive elements, heavily effected synths and guitars and perplexingly, the odd acoustic instrument thrown in for good measure. It's actually pretty entertaining and good to know that I have absolutely no idea where they are coming from! Could do with more stuff like this...

DD

[NO ADDRESS LISTED. Distributed by Rough Trade Deutschland]

v/a
ANCIENT LIGHTS AND THE BLACKCORE
[Sub Rosa CDalbum]

Bizarre and enigmatic sampler of oddly (and uselessly, as far as I can figure) juxtaposed artists/styles. SCORN start off with the excellent 'Naked Sun', which bursts into electronic dub/semi-jungle motion after a few minutes of discreet droning. This, together with the TIMOTHY LEARY track, would have made a great EP. SEEFEEL follow with three "Succour" out-takes. 'As If' has an eastern tinge, its crackling/distortion being briefly intriguing, but it's of distinctly lesser interest. Ditto their other short tracks. "Succour" was an arid, joyless construction; their 'less is more' aesthetic is threadbare. Next comes a DAVID TOOP field recording of Yanomani shamans indulging in a spot of group healing. It sounds like my two eldest 'children' trying to put a curse on the idiot baby for wrecking some Lego construction it's taken them all day to build. Only a tragic failed academic or a middle class loser suffering from a weird combination of displaced guilt and inverse racism would think recordings of 'natives' on CD are anything more than worthless. Finally there's Tim Leary, merely one of the 20th century's most important figures. Here he pops out of DJ Cheb i Sabbah's 15 minute heavy doom/trance mix to ask 'Why are you here?' Ain't got a clue, mate...

SJ

[Sub Rosa, PO Box 808, CM 1000 Brussels, Belgium]

v/a
... AND EVEN THE WOLVES HID THEIR TEETH
[Cold Meat Industry CDalbum]

Established as Europe's premier dark underground label, this sampler is an ideal way to summon all its demons in one cheap-to-perform ritual, i.e. popping to your nearest open-minded music store and purchasing. From Industrial routes, bands such as MENTAL DESTRUCTION, IN SLAUGHTER NATIVES and BRIGHTER DEATH NOW have flourished. Ambient scopists MORTHOND, DEUTSCH NEPAL and ILDFROST penetrate the landscapes, and onto newer death icons such as MORTIIS, AGHAST and ORDO EQUILIBRIO who proffer a sinister direction, the highly stylised Swedish label is set aflame with this compilation of 15 bands and tracks. Most interesting was the inclusion of a MZ.412 (Maschinenzimmer 412) track from their forthcoming new album. This is their first new work in some years and 'God of fifty names' heralds the shift into bleaker ambience whilst still retaining that Industrial tangibility. This inclusion alone makes this set a must for possession. Just

leave your own souls in the possession of the Karmanik 'family'.
DD
[Cold Meat Industry, PO Box 1881, 581 17 Linkoping, Sweden]

AND THEN YOU DIE
Song B
[No Label VIDEO]
A one-track promo which has no other information other than band and title. Haven't even any idea where this came from... It's a huge dirge of a track, visually lit through slow-panning of a grim corridor. Dead boring I hear you cry... Well, actually no. The desperate atmosphere of the "Song B" is enhanced by the lack of any niceties. Whoever you are, GET IN TOUCH.
DD
[NO ADDRESS LISTED]

APOLLO 440
Millenium Fever
[Sony Music CDalbum]
Now, I'm unsure about this lot. On the one hand they're being touted with all the techno stuff over here, which would explain the elongation of a lot of the tracks on this album, but then, on the other hand, spin 'Astral America' and all I can hear is The Shamen in ultra-poppy mode (I'm not even going to mention 'Don't Fear The (bloody) Reaper'). 'Liquid Cool' was one hell of a single, beyond the realms of most UK pop music - I even thought the band was Scandinavian, or German, before hearing they were from Liverpool - weird! 'Liquid Cool' on here is twelve minutes and far too long, and leads me to believe they want to play in both worlds. It's not going to work guys, you LOOK like a pop-group, your videos are 'pop' videos, forget the technological self-indulgence and create some songs in the vein of 'Liquid Cool' - there I've plugged it again for you. Reissue it, get Sony to put some real $$$ behind it and get the fucker hyped into the charts, then we're away... "Millenium Fever", not yet, but maybe...
DD
[Sony Music - in your favourite music store around the globe]

THE ARCH
Second and Centuries
[Discordia CDalbum]
The inside photo of The Arch has them posing in fur (fake I trust!) and looking like a mixture of Van Morrison meets Bon Jovi. But impressions can be deceptive. There's some serious guitar floating about and interesting sequences here and there though vocally much too German/Goth for my liking and I'm still rather concerned about the origins of those fur coats - until you can prove yourselves I shall listen no more.
GE
[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

ARTHUR LOVES PLASTIC
Sperm Warfare
[T.E.Q. MUSIC? CDmini-album]
This 7 track disc offers some of the catchiest, sexiest music ever, delivered in a teasing style with punchy bass lines and pulsing beats all exquisitely cast for your personal pleasure. Assembling round the characteristic dance drum patterns are some terrific wibbly wobbly synth effects and enlightened sampling. But for all its precise, mechanistic qualities ALP's music rarely seems cold or impersonal, it taps instead a carefree vein of futuristic delight, intimating an innocent joy in the tricks that the machinery plays. The gleaming electro pop beauty of the opening 'I Love You' with its seductive pulling power is completely refreshing and 'The Plastic Men' with its sexual innuendo is as immediate as anything else I have ever heard. The perplexingly titled 'Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah' ascends to equally dizzy heights of dynamic pop perfection. Recorded by Bev S. in the basement all I can say is Bev "I love you".
CB
[T.E.Q. Music?, PO Box 87, Ilford, Essex IG1 3HJ, UK]

PATRICK ASCIONE
Métamorphose d'un Jaune Citron
[Metamkine CDsingle]
That Jérôme Noetinger (*auteur* of Metamkine's Cinéma pour l'oreille 3" CD series) is able to conjure up releases of outstanding quality with such apparent ease is nothing short of astonishing... Barring Jim O'Rourke's disappointing entry I can't think of a 'conceptual' series which has maintained such high standards (certainly not, for example, Table of the Elements' solo guitar records). Ascione's disc sounds like four decades of badly digested experimental electronics farted wetly through a dysfunctional digestive tract - explosive swill, and another 'must have'.
SJ
[Metamkine, 13 rue de la Drague, 38600 Fontaine, France]

v/a
ASH 2.1
[Ash International CDalbum]
A sampler, but in the Ash/Touch tradition no ordinary sampler. Not content in merely offering their wares they mash it all up from HAFLER TRIO to SCANNER, from S.E.T.I. and AUROBINDO, to airplanes, trains, and 'The Great British Public' into one long mass, or 78 minutes for those watching the clock. If this is really aimed at radio DJ's then there'll be a few dead bodies on your hands (actually that may not be a bad thing...). No segues. No track titles. Just a sound excursion...
DD
[Ash International, 13 Osward Road, London SW17 7SS, UK]

ATARAXIA
La Malediction d'Ondine
[Energeia CDalbum]
Another chapter opens in Ataraxia's story, with more beautifully crafted songs from an ancient time and a less complicated world. This album seems to be an evocation (or invocation, who knows) of numerous female figures from mythology, the songs sung in French, English and Italian. Francesca Nicoli's near operatic multi-tracked vocals soar across the rich tableaux of guitars and keyboards (which are more than just a backdrop). Much of this album seems despairing, yet simultaneously uplifting. "La Malediction d'Ondine" is an hour-long journey into a magical underwater realm of darkly powerful lovesongs and hymns for a lost age. Wonderful.
VL
[Energeia, c/o Davide Morgera, Via MAnzoni 9, 80019 Qualiano, Napoli, Italy]

ATTRITION
The Attrition of Reason
In the Realm of the Hungry Ghosts
[Relic/Projekt CDalbums]
Completing the trio of early albums, these two finally are digitally aired. "The Attrition of Reason" was possibly the band's bleakest sounding phase, filled with images of gothic mystique, and dressing like extras from a Bela Lugosi. The music was intensely dark, often simple, straight sequences and cheap rhythms with ghostly wind instruments wailing in time with Julia's operatic anger and Martin's low moans. Listening to it again, it is actually very depressing! The inclusion of their "Voice Of God" EP makes this essential. Four tracks of sparse sequencing, but containing some of Julia and Martin's best vocal work. Uplifting. Meanwhile, released in 1986, "In the Realm of the Hungry Ghost" collected compilation tracks and unreleased material and kind of rounded off that era of Attrition. Tracks such as 'In Your Hand' - deliriously dark - previously released on Crass' "Bullshit Detector III" album, the ambient soundtrack 'Marianne's Dream', the moving 'The Last Refuge' and 'The Beginning of the End's massive arrangement make this another essential. The nice Relic people also tack on the 4 tracks used on Third Mind's "Future Tense" compilation, containing more poetics and powerful electronic pop.
DD
[Relic, Box 1591, Garden Grove, CA 92642-1591, USA]

ATTRITION
Ephemera
[Hyperium CDalbum]

In a lavish box, this CD was worked on extensively throughout 1993 as the follow-up to the 1987 soundtrack album, "Death House". Attrition here is just Martin Bowes and his darker inspirations are allowed to flow. Freely improvised, using piano and electronics, coupled with cleverly utilised sampled snatches - often appearing from nowhere, hence greatly unnerving - "Ephemera" has a nightmarish ambience, but cannot be compared to any ambient music. It's good to see a work of this nature using percussion so well, which is the element which sets it away from so much experimental music. This is five tracks of truly soundtrack material. I hope we don't have to wait another 8 years for Martin to work on something like this again.

DD

[Hyperium, PO Box 910127, 90259 Nurnberg, Germany]

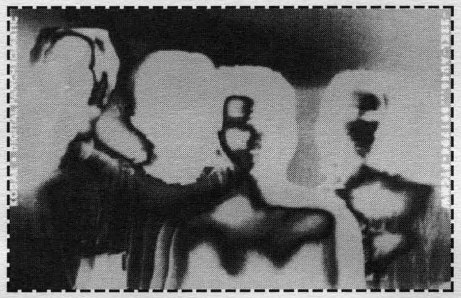
AUROBINDO
Involution
[Ash International CDalbum]

Amazing Seefeel and Locust collaboration. Highly resonant tones wander through a repetitious void. A hugely cavernous interior is filled with sampled bells, chains and other non-definable source material. Even the sequenced quasi-electronic 'Supermind's Light Becomes Part of the Earth' is tempered with surrounding static pulling away from any vison of standardised technoid territory. The ten minute 'Battery Ending' is a full, unrelenting force, shifting pitch until... It's gone... "Involution" is a remarkable recording and not only for its immense and fathomless production quality. More please.

DD

[Ash International, 13 Osward Road, London SW17 7SS, UK]

AUSCHWITZ 46
Battered Drained Forgotten
[46 Broadcastes CDalbum]



There's not that much I can honestly say about this release. Here goes... It's fucking brilliant! Have you ever been to an abattoir? 'Cos I'm sure if you listen to this you'll be shitting for weeks. Maniac vocals, crunching guitars and deranged sequences with no pointless samples. Auschwitz thrive in a crawl-space somewhere between "Rabies" era Puppy and early Skrew, and with songs such as the haunting 'Terminal 93', and the scornful, Panteraesque 'Progress Or Decay' they'll soon be creating a niche in which only the strongest will survive.

SS

[46 Broadcastes, PO Box 92109, File #228 Austin, Texas 78709-2109, USA]

B-ZET
When I See...
[Eye Q CDalbum]

It's good to see an overall commercial sounding album play around so much with influences and sound. Covering trance and spatial ambience this flows with a beautiful mellow edge. Over half of the album features vocals in differing forms, but whilst easily fitting into the criteria of chart territory seem somehow too clever to fit into the mould too easily. Crisply produced with a considerable tonal range longish songs move through sequenced and single note passages. Even the field recordings used are altered to sound interesting! The face of New Age with the boredom element totally removed. "When I See..." is an album to refer to endlessly with each listen giving something new to gain.

DD

[Eye Q, Strahlenbergerstr. 125a, 63067 Offenbach, Germany]

BAKAMONO
The Cry of the Turkish Fig Peddler
[BASURA!/Priority CDalbum]

I'm sure (I hope...) these guys are tired of being called vapid post-Sonic Youth wannabees (or whatever the hell it is, precisely, they do wannabe), but from my bleak, blinkered & hostile perspective on the World Pop Music Scene that's exactly what they are. The press release might flaunt their spiritual links to Steel Pole Bathtub, Flipper and Star Pimp but that's less meaningful to me then claiming you haven't experienced life until you've spent a lifetime in a dog kennel with a five-legged camel fetus.

SJ

[BASURA!, PO Box 2186, Los Angeles, CA 90078, USA]

BAKED BEANS
Bean Me Up, Scotty!
[Recycle Or Die CDalbum]

Containing tracks with names such as 'Jim Bean', 'James Bean', 'Human Bean' and the best of all, 'The Unbearable Lightness of Bean', this lightweight set by a German trio is a staple diet of upfront ambience. Long pieces, which remind in places of Swim's Immersion, are made easily palatable by the inclusion of strummed oriental guitars, which moves the set into another realm entirely. I wouldn't exactly call it Prog-ish as the electronics are far too current, but overall the sound is nearing those waters. A pleasant journey through the Heinz variety.

DD

[Recycle Or Die, Strahlenbergerstr. 125a, 63067 Offenbach, Germany]

BANCO DE GAIA
Last Train To Lhasa
[Planet Dog CDsingle]

According to the piece of paper with this, it's gonna be a tip top TOTP smash hit for all concerned, and some kind of political statement, i.e. the Chinese should get the fuck out of Tibet, right on! (*get the Chinese the fuck off the planet more to my liking*). Still what we have is a fine, multi-cultural bobbing, the 'radio edit' doesn't do it much justice, far too short. The 10 mins plus 'original version', is a swirling journey, with a real catchy harpsichord riff, Eastern vocals, held together with solid drum patterns, as one would expect. The 'Ambient mix' is much of the same, plenty of sample work and vocals, though doesn't quite conjure up a Tibetan landscape or the suppressed masses, more a train trip to Brighton on a lazy summers day. All in all a really good tune (*but get it on a compilation or the album*).

DM

BANCO DE GAIA
Last Train To Lhasa
[Planet Dog CDalbum]

Unfortunately I listen to rather a lot of this kind of thing, and it's rather hard to find things one just hasn't heard before. The whole techno ambient scene seems to have run out of new ideas of late. Still, as the title suggests this album is a journey through meandering soundscapes, multi-layered textures conjuring all things mellow, and a delight. If I have to draw some kind of comparisons, Sven Vath meets Transglobal Underground, and it works well. The title can be more appreciated in this environment rather than on the single as it slowly fades into the second track 'Kuo's', which keeps it all at an even tempo and paces the journey on the Tibetan theme. Disc 2: 3 tracks spanning 60mins, additional mixes of 'Kuo's' and 'Kincajou'. 'Ku' becomes rather a more danceable affair, on this, suffering from that Ebola-like techno disease high-hat tap! Whereas the 36min epic 'Kincajou', and the last track 'Eagle', are both more back to basics, the wibbly wobbly chill-out zone of the astral surfer, moving the albums concept as far as possible from the trouble of planet Earth, and the plight of the Tibetan people, which inspired the concept of the album. Pretty cool stuff, and great

value for your cash if you can obtain the limited edition package, an extra disc, taking the whole thing to a near 3 hours of soul searching tunes.
DM
[Planet Dog, 271 Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 9LU, UK]

BAND OF PAIN
Argento
[Dirter LP]
By gum, those Herne Bay laddies keep themselves busy at night. This is a 'side project' of Mr Dirter/Splintered member Steve Pittis and is of the 'drone & tape swill' variety - and, like Husk, it's actually more interesting than much of Splintered's material... Side one might be almost up to JLIAT level of drone intensity were it not slightly compromised by a tape of some tedious religio dork driveling on incomprehensibly. Side two gets mildly more excitable - the odd guitar, sax, some boiling oil & rather foolish shouting - but only mildly. Nice packaging, clear vinyl & doubtless ridiculously limited run makes this a useful addition to the 'monotony as be all and end all' school of, uh, monotony... I just hope the title has no connection to the talentless Italian schlock film director.
SJ
[Dirter, PO Box 61, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 8GA, UK]

BANG BANG MACHINE
Breathless
[Ultimate Records CDsingle]
These releases of several versions of the same track are becoming a bit tedious but if you really must have four tracks of one song I suppose there are two good reasons to buy this offering. 1. It has a running time of 22+ minutes. 2. The second track 'Strange Brew Mix' is a somewhat cool remix by Mancunian dubsters Strangebrew. Don't expect to be left breathless though.
CB
[Ultimate, 271 Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 9LU, UK]

MARTYN BATES
Mystery Seas (Letters Written 2)
[A-Scale CDalbum]
How can one describe in words such emotional cascades as "Mystery Seas". Once again without fail Martyn Bates creates flawless mirages and barren landscapes of explicit consciousness. Riddled throughout with the sort of incoherence and fragility which made Eyeless In Gaza such an immense encounter, at times the guy could be reciting his shopping list for all we know, or care really, for the magic conjured up by a single gasp expresses a magnitude of explanations. This is stark and lonely, yet warm and touching collection of songs drifts over your nerve ends and gentle massages your soul. Truly enchanting, beautiful.
GE
[A-Scale, PO Box 3, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 9YT, UK]

BATTERY
NV
[COP International CDalbum]
A massive 23-track album from the U.S. Battery, who manage to meet pop and noise head-on. Much of "NV" is pretty laid back, but has a surface of noise through deep synthetic tones, the occasional sample and nothing more than excellent production. They mangle EBM sequences, ethereal ambience and dark-wave into an unusual 'something' which sets them out there all on their own. I do wish they hadn't covered Depeche Mode's 'Shame', as Mode are a reference throughout and it's all too obvious, but Maria Azevedo has a deep enough vocal to pull it off - the music though is of course, too twee for these times. The fact that they follow this with a 26 second track, 'Mind-Killer' which is a velocity-charged pounding, and 'Go''s psychotic blend of nasty and nice, is what pulls this album through the rough patches, of which it has a few. In all though, an album worth investigating for its sheer complexity.
DD
[COP International, Munzenburgstr. 3, 61440 Oberhursel, Germany]

BEDOUIN ASCENT
Further Self Evident Truths
[Rising High CD]
More challenging eclectic beats for Biswas' Bedouin Ascent. In a similar vein to his debut album "Science Art And Ritual", "Further Self Evident Truths" delivers more experimental tones. Imagine early Tangerine Dream meets roughneck Aphex Twin and you're kinda there. Highlight has to be track four 'Tripped On Beats', a fucked up wash of synth enhanced jungle derived rhythms.
RM
[Rising High, 7 Westbourne Grove Mews, London W11 2RU, UK]

BELT
The Killing Verdict
[Freedom In A Vacuum CDalbum]
Been very impressed with the batch of CD's this Canadian label have sent through and this last one from Belt is no exception from both their excellent presentation and quality of sound. Belt get straight to the nitty-gritty. From the opening two minutes of 'Black & Tan' you're nailed over the head with a erupting surge of electronics and Death Metal styled vocals. The initial silence of the second, 'Your Cross/My Face' is a lull before the vicious vocal screams spitting hatred in measured doses, and if that wasn't enough to take a guitar loop kicks in to beat you senseless. The wonderfully titled, 'Jesus Christ Told Me To Fuck You Up' stems the blood flow and is a subtlety of strings and whispered vocals, that is, until the eighth minute when a storm of psychedelia overwhelms and the heady paranoiac voice loses all control and rages - Godflesh fans take note. The closing 'Milk' will appeal to Puppy fans too, being a quiet, acoustic track with soft, but grim vocals... Belt are evil. Nasty Bastards who'll not only bite off your ears, but eat the bloody mess too. If you thought Sielwolf were extreme, catch a few minutes of this lot. Loved it.
DD

THE KILLING VERDICT

[Freedom In A Vacuum, PO Box 862, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2N7, Canada]

EMIL BEAULIEAU
Minutoli
[Pure CDalbum]
An extreme release on RRR's new 'budget' imprint, Pure (which also features other (extreme!) works by Aube, Sudden Infant and more Emil with a wide range to follow). Minutoli's dedication (to Richard Rupenus) is more than apt, as the music contained herein makes painfully apparent. This is headache-inducing destroyed-noise of gigantic proportions. Everything is distorted to the limit, resulting in a kind of textural assault that is almost soothing, in a cathartic way. With a single continuous piece in 50 minutes (indexed in 9 places) Beaulieau doesn't stretch things out excessively which is just as well, given the potential of the CD format. Perhaps because of the distortion overload, "Minutoli" doesn't have as wide a dynamic range as The New Blockaders but is still a 'good' power electronics workout and probably quite necessary (for pain-free moments). I wonder when my ears will stop ringing...
VL
[Pure, 151 Paige Street, Lowell, MA 01852, USA]

v/a
THE BEST OF MIND/BODY
[Fifth Column Records CDalbum]
Fifth Column have seen fit to produce a 'best of' both

mind/body. Previously released on Atomic Novelties, a collective of trax that have been surfing around the Internet for whatever reason, be it defining the meaning of Industrial, or protesting against sampling copyright. Hence addition of software for connection to Cyberden BBS, for those of you surfing, which I'm not, and not liable to be for rather a long time; evil forces rule my world folks. Musically this neck of the cyberwood is a dark and sinister place, far removed from metal foundations that have saturated the market place. Yet, there's not a great deal of diversity, or contrast in quality, so isolating individual trax would be rather unfair to the rest. "Best of Mind/Body" does place some light at the end of the tunnel for the disconnected punter wondering where the rosy future of yesteryear went. Essential listening me thinks for the cyber minded.

DM

[Fifth Column Records, POB 787, Washington, DC 20044, USA]

BIG CITY ORCHESTRA
The Consumer CD
[Commercial Failure CDalbum]

BCO set their sights on the charts with this new release, which is perhaps even more whacked-out than their "Beatlerape" CD. Exactly which charts those are, and on which planet they are currently in use, is anyone's guess. "The Consumer CD" has 99 tracks broken down as follows: the first 57 are 'ads' recorded by BCO (the opening 'Where There's Life, There's Bud' is frankly hilarious - and ads for alcohol are a fair proportion of the 57); track 55 gives you some handy CD care tips (always useful); the remaining 41 (bonus?) tracks are so-called 'sound FX' (all perpetrated by the Orchestra, of course - just don't even ask, okay?). I'm sold already and that's probably all I need to tell you about this (the label name speaks volumes, believe me). I don't quite know what to make of BCO's newly found 'commercial' direction, but I do know that I'd buy it - and that's all that matters, isn't it music-lovers?

VL

[Commercial Failure, 2005 Mission Street #56, San Francisco, CA 94410-1217, USA]

BIONIC
Rest In Piece
[Off Beat CDalbum]

I picked this CD up and thought 'oh god this looks dodgy!' - Bionic is such a sad name and the CD's title "Rest In Piece" - I ask you? My mother always told me "never judge a book by its cover", and after listening to this I found out she was right. This album adds new dimensions to EBM with competent programming and good vocals. The songs take a long time to get thumping but when they do, they literally blow your head off! The sound varies between Front Line Assembly's more caustic approach and simple pop which is reminiscent of Marc Almond on 'Antimatter'. It's a damn shame the lyrics are pretty crap, 'cos this recording is full of catchy choruses like "I don't shave" (only joking) on the song 'No Fate' and "I Don't Care" on the song 'I Don't Care'. Overall Bionic make you groove.., so get off your butts and go out and buy this now!

SS

[Off Beat, Horster Strasse 27, 45897 Gelsenkirchen-Buer, Germany]

BIRMINGHAM 6
Assassinate
[Cleopatra Records CDalbum]

The first question that comes to mind when listening to this disc is 'why aren't these guys on Zoth Ommog?' Instead they appear on Hard records - licensed to Cleopatra in the U.S. - on which they demonstrate their ability to beat a dancefloor into submission with unrelenting cyber energy. Digging a hole in sand similar to the Psychopomps and Leaether Strip (but with a little more technoravelike touches in the beats), B6 is a technopunk's paradise.

R-M

[Cleopatra Records, 8726 Sepulveda, ste. D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

BLEAK
Vane
[Projekt CDalbum]

I had to leave this album a long time before I could even bear to touch it. At the time it came through the mail and I immediately threw it into the CD player, but I was in no frame of mind to hear it! I could've done myself, or someone else (especially someone else) some permanent damage. If you think that Lycia are bleak then you haven't heard Mike VanPortfleet's new suitably titled project. Fucking hell, he really drags the depths with this release. Trawling through wave upon wave of the deepest, darkest of electronic/guitar sounds, becoming one long mass of sheer musical desperation. The equivalent of power electronics, death metal and the blackness of gothicism forged into one bullet targeted somewhere around the lower stomach region. Depressing. Dismal. Choose your own description. Just be careful of your own sanity state before hitting the play button. BLEAK.

DD

[Projekt, Box 1591, Garden Grove, CA 92642-1591, USA]

PETER BLEGVAD / JOHN GREAVES
Unearthed
[Sub Rosa CDalbum]

Didn't expect much from this but it's the finest erstwhile Henry Cow person project I've heard for ages. The duo provide a sparse but always appropriate musical backdrop for Blegvad's recitations of weirdness and woe. His voice is the perfect blend of deadpan and irony, rendering every piece mysterious, bizarre & compulsive. Probably better to listen to it without reading the lyrics, which would detract slightly from the overall effect - Blegvad's voice is crystal clear anyway. An excellent release from a frequently dodgy label.

SJ

[Sub Rosa, PO Box 808, 1000 Brussels, Belgium]

BLOK 57
Animals On Speed
[Zoth Ommog CDalbum]

Guy Van Miegham's latest excursion as Blok 57 is an excellent sonic explosion. Electro noise rather than straight sequencing is used throughout, and his chromium voice adds to an all-out machine state. Guitars are distorted beyond recognition and simply meld into the metallic sound. Just when you thought it couldn't be taken any further...

DD

[Zoth Ommog, Norsk-Data-Str. 3, 61352 BAD Homburg, Germany]

BOB'S LEGS
p.s.: Pittsburgh maybe/maru to sankuru no uta
[33 revpermi 7"]

To turn a Pete Seeger song into such a nightmarish concoction as the 'A' side is certainly something of an achievement... Low end rumble, electronics/tapes, dobro (!) and a 'straight' rendition of the lyrics combine to most peculiar results... The other side's a minute long 'cover version' of a film soundtrack 'song' by modern Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu... A curious artefact indeed. The 'band' includes various Soixante Etages members and Jérome Noetinger...

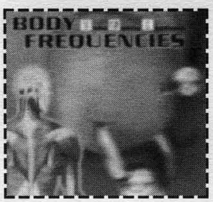
SJ

[B.P. 3042-F, 54012 Nancy Cedex, France]

v/a
BODY FREQUENCIES
[Minus Habens Records CDalbum]

Not content with showing the worlds of computer technology and experimentation the label now moves into the realms of tattooing and body modification. The tracks on the compilation are meant to act as a soundtrack whilst one takes part in one of these activities. Myself having never felt the desire to experience any of these practices I can't judge whether the pieces work on that level, but "Body Frequencies" is a strangely diverse mix of tracks. One might expect serrated noise to run throughout but this is not the case. Acts as far and wide as SMELL & QUIM, E. GEOMETRICO, KAPOTTE MUZIEK and DIVE rub shoulders with KLANGE, IMPLANT CODE, JOUISSANCE and FULL

DYNAMIC RANGE, so the whole electronic underground is more or less covered. Dance beats and sequences match ritualistic percussion and distortion over 70 minutes of creative sound. An inventive compilation where no boundaries inflict repetitious band styles on its whole.
DD
[Minus Habens Records, via Giustino Forunato 8/N, 70125 Bari, Italy]



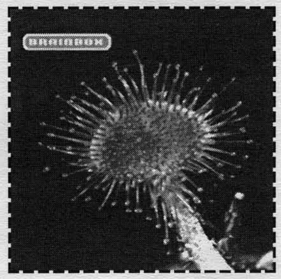
BOL
Hate Breeds Hate
[Gonzo CDalbum]
Rather than following the guitar trend, LA-based Bol serves up an aggressive synth platter that adheres to the 80's school of technocore. Even with their blend of Nitzer Ebb and Depeche Mode influences, the production on this disc is definitely from the 90's (unlike the cheesy retro beats and feel of Orange Sector's 'Kids in America' cover). No doubt Seibold from Hate Dept. is partly responsible, as his hands are all over the mix, not to mention a remix. If you've given up on the US due to it's rock n' roll bent, then this band might be the ray of hope all of you 242 addicts are looking for.
R-M
[Gonzo, PO Box 3688, San Dimas, CA 91773, USA

GRAHAM BOWERS
Of Mary's Blood
[Red Wharf CDalbum]
Mr Bowers himself describes this opus as "a musical and pictorial expression of the physical forms of spiritual fragilities and strengths". "Of Mary's Blood" is a composition in both music and painting, a claim that the vaguely Bellmer/Tanguy-like neo-surrealist pictures adorning the cover would seem to confirm. Lasting just over 45 minutes, this single-track soundscape is a melding of soothing passages and altogther more harrowing noise and there's almost a filmic quality to the proceedings. The sleeve gives no indication of how this was composed (i.e. what instruments were tortured for the purpose) and it's difficult to tell from the face of it, which is a good thing. Harshness rubs shoulders with more lyrical sections. New Age this is not - be assured of that - but there is something transendent about this recording which perhaps justifies the description quoted above. An intriguing first release from an enigmatic organisation who appear to produce painting and sculpture too. So get writing.
VL
[Red Wharf, PO Box 1208, Llangefni, Angelsey, Gwynedd LL75 8ZA, UK. Marketed by Direction Music]

BRAIN LEISURE
Mindfire
[Hard Records CDalbum]
French Hardbeat isn't exactly flowing from Europe's pores, but here's a new name to ponder... Obviously "Mindfire" falls into categories already explored by countless others but their bass-heavy sequences, minimal beats and speech synthesis is not without old-world charm. Perhaps eight years ago I would've had a bit more to say about this album...
DD
[Hard Records, C.F. Richs VEJ 122, 2.th, 2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark]

BRAIN POLICE
Fuel
[BGR Records CDalbum]
BGR have quickly established themselves as a kind of 'alternative' Earache. Their catalogue is fast filling with excellent guitar-fuelled noise. Brain Police is one of their finest acts. Intense, occasional brutal, more often low-down and wholesome, they've refined a sound which expels a gutteral formity which breaks through to almost, almost commercial acceptability. A sense of humour is retained, and moments of acoustic free-form drag "Fuel" away from typical metal genres. Outstanding.
DD
[BGR Records, PO Box 54, West PDO, Nottingham, NG7 5BN, UK]

BRAINBOX
Primordia
[Nettwerk CDalbum]
Brainbox is Toronto based Tom Third, aka Brother and System, which I've not heard. "Primordia" though is a mainstream of astral techno grooves, thickened by all manner of tributary pollutants resulting in whirlpools, eddies that spin and bubble a cocktail of precisioned sounds and influences. For those who've delighted in the sheer bliss of the transmissions by FSOL, it won't come as a surprise that someone else is bang at it. "Primordia" is certainly of the same wavelength and quality as FSOL, and round these here parts they are the Gods of all knob twiddling. Mid album the realisation that the streams become an ocean, as wave upon wave of musical flotsam and jetsam float, in and out. The expanse and timelessness of it all, must be a sign of brilliance. If FSOL are the dog's bollocks then Brainbox must be the healthy shiny wet nose.



DM
[Nettwerk, Box 330, 1755 Robson St., Vancouver, BC, V6G 3B7, Canada]

JOHN CAME
Rhythmicon
[Mute Records CDalbum]
To fully convey the concept behind this album would require reprinting the lengthy sleeve notes, so forget it. Basically it involves loading Came's compositions into a machine (based on a design by Henry Cowell and Leon Theremin) which scrambles, reprograms & redesigns them into different forms, "exchanging harmonic & melodic information for rhythmic and vice versa." Unfortunately "Rhythmicon" is of academic interest only. Besides sounding twee and ineffectual, it possesses the negative attributes I'm always moaning about - too stylistically diverse/no overall cohension - ultimately resembling an early electro-pweep anthology or the tentative flailings of a failed experiment/half-defined concept: when it's 'weird' it's too self-conscious, when it's'straight' it sounds like something that would accompany a KOYAANISQUATSI-type film of speeded-up Chinese bicyclists, or uh, perhaps the Silicon Teens... By far the most interesting part was when my copy went berserk halfway through - I'd accidentally ploinked it in the machine on top of a 3" CD adaptor - sounded kinda like Oval...
SJ
[Mute Records, 429 Harrow Rd, London, W10 4RE, UK]

CHANDEEN
Jutland
[Hyperium CDalbum]
'Ethereal, melancholic dream-pop for the Nineties', so the press release says, as well as other such hyped-up crap-trap. So easy listening even your mummy wouldn't like it. The pretty vocals are so sugary sweet they make one wanna puke... On a more positive note the odd instrumental soundscapes are all nice and moody, in a new age hippy kind of way (but I'm far too young for it all). Selling like hotcakes in Germany, the land where David Hasselhoff's a mega-rock God?? True!!
DM
[Hyperium, PO Box 910127, 90259 Nurnberg, Germany]

v/a
CHAOS
[Cop International CDalbum]
Designed to be an illustration of the new cross gender Industrial scene, so it say's here. New? Is very debatable, it's what one

would expect from a Cyber rock comp, and there's been a good few, from the genres of second division outfits. I've read some good things about DEATHLINE INTERNATIONAL, shame I've had to contend with a recital of 'Tainted Love' first! LEATHERSTRIP's 'Serenade For The Dead' is as brooding as the title suggests. SWAMP TERRORISTS hip hop affair 'Get O', and BIGOD 20's 'Retortion 001' just sounds so much like old Blancmange - remember them? Was more impressed with the lesser known outfits such as PIECE MACHINE, APPARATUS, HAENZEL AND GRETYL. They could all do with a dense sound and vocalists whose bollocks have dropped. Recommended bargain bin purchase.
DM
[COP International, Munzenburgstr. 3, 61440 Oberhursel, Germany]

CHERCHE-LUNE
Dun Emrys
[Prikosnovenie CDalbum]
Can anyone out there name half a dozen credible French acts? I hate to say it, but this is quite pleasant slow tempo folk music experience. Pretty vocalised French lyrics, violin, clavier, flutes and complimentary percussion. Possibly the first credible French act.
DM
[Prikosnovenie, 5 Rue Desire Colombe, 44100 Nantes, France]

CHILDREN OF THE BONG
Sirius Sounds
[Planet Dog CDalbum]
A bloody amazing dance album, which floods the speakers with a range of influences and objectives. These Bong lads are only 21, but they've gone way beyond their earlier efforts and produced a groove which melds elements from dub, trance, hip-hop and ambience into one long head-trip of psychedelia - I must add that none of these cuts sound exactly the same either. Many of the tracks hold an experimental edge, and there's even some dirt around those crystalline sounds. I'd even go as far to say that some Puppy fans may enjoy moments of "Sirius Sounds". Go on, all you non-technoists, try the Children method of UK dance.
DD
[Planet Dog, 271 Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 9LU, UK]

MICHEL CHION
Gloria
[Metamkine CDsingle]
Oops, I shouldn't have bleated so loudly earlier, for lo! here's a nauseating dog turd on Metamkine's otherwise largely spotless footpath... An endless, unamusing 'romp' through various 'methods' of (occasionally accordion-powered) blabbering, crooning & bellowing the title. Oral-fixated gibberish has to be pretty spectacular to succeed, and compared to, say, Henri Chopin, Gregory Whitehead or Jaap Blonk (whose 'normal' style of declaiming sounds like cut-ups...) this is most distressing and unneccesary...
SJ
[Metamkine, 13 rue de la Drague, 38600 Fontaine, France]

CHRISTIAN DEATH
The Rage Of Angels
[Cleopatra Records CDalbum]
Sad times indeed. Christian Death should give up the ghost, they are dead. A spirit of their past lives on in some sorts via Mephisto Waltz but this incarnation recorded in 1992 leaves me cold. The intro 'Trust' hints at their past glory but the remainder slips into self parody very swiftly. 'Still born/Still life Part 1 (For Jeffrey Dahmer with love)' is a laughable attempt at being evil, nasty and controversial. Is this the best they can do? The high point of the disc is the barely passable closing cover of Bowie's 'Panic In Detroit'. If you want to hear the real Christian Death, track down any one of the many excellent offerings featuring Valor.
CB
[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

CIRCUS OF PAIN
The Swamp-Meat Intoxications
[Sub/Mission CDmini-album]
Hands up those who like sex, 'cos this is sex and it's for people who do strange things when Mummy and Daddy aren't around. The sleeve depicts women in S&M gear and the music within reflects this by whipping big fat ass! The amalgam of seven tracks was conceived, spawned and executed by various members of Swamp Terrorists and Meathead, so fans of these sadistic lunatics should love this. For those of you who haven't yet experienced these delights, the overall sound is a combination of ugly vocals, heavy guitars, big break-beats and perverse lyrics... "I feel like dirty sheets" ('Remove My Skin'), all topped off with meaty production. In my opinion I don't think this recording is suitable for vegetarians, but do you think they'd give a fuck? Consume and enjoy.
SS
[Sub/Mission, Via Turati 22/28, I-50136 Firenze, Italy]

CLAIR OBSCUR
A Collection Of Isolated Tracks 1982-1988
[Apocalyptic Vision CDalbum]
The fact that this album has the Cathexis' 'Smurf In The Gulag' track means this MUST be purchased. This track more than any endeared this French troupe to me. A mad mix of dance sequences, soft guitar and that powerful teasing vocal elevate the song to great heights. Clair Obscur were more than this one song though. They've been well documented in the left-field press for their performance art approach, but at the same time produced songs in a Cure-ish vein, even heavy Joy Division influences. This collection of singles, compilation tracks and rare tracks is merely another to add to the "Play" and "In Out" CD's already sitting in your racks. Includes a great booklet with superb black and white photographs which say so much about the experimental nature of the band.
DD
[Apocalyptic Vision, Ahornweg 19, D-64807 Dieburg, Germany]

ANNE CLARK
To Love and Be Loved
[SPV CDalbum]
Repetition! Same old formula! Exactly like every other album Anne Clark has released! Repetition of such brilliance will always be welcome on this hi-fi and I trust that Anne will never change her 'same old formula' that creates these high quality productions. Just like that annoying kid at school who always got straight A's with absolutely no effort! And with To Love and Be Loved she can most certainly go to the top of the class *again*!! Yet another evocative engrossing ride on the rollercoaster of emotion, she conveys love, loss or bitterness so effortlessly on this ten track beauty. Back to a more electronic feel, almost reminiscent of Scorn, but the core is still bearing the soul, tearing through nerves and caressing gentle. "Mundesley Beach" captures perfectly that moment of loneliness and sadness which only nature's loneliness can comfort. "A Letter of Thanks to a Friend" a haunting, funkyish note of empathy. Atmospherics enhanced on a number of tracks by backing vocals from the wonderful Martyn Bates. What more can I say, a angel forged in heaven - buy it or be damned.
GE
[SPV, PO Box 1147, 30531 Hannover, Germany]

CODE
The Architect
[Third Mind Records CDalbum]
Code's album has been widely acclaimed and for a change, quite rightly so. Theirs' is such a full sound which is a real strength, perhaps due to them being a full band of four creative members. Based in the UK's suburbia heartland they output images of escape, either through soaring orchestral pieces or hard driving sequences. 'Cities' is probably the single which should have seen them elevated in the same light as the Underworld's or Leftfield's, as this is the area of semi-commercial, leftfield electronica in which Code belong. It should only be a matter of time. This album is but the first phase...
DD
[Third Mind Records, Suites W & T, Tech West Centre, 10 Warple Way, London W3 0UL, UK]

COFFEE
Rold Gecord
[Blackjack 7"]
Side one provides a nasty illustration of the mortifying school of 'thought' which posthulates the hypothesis that anyone can make a stupid sound and call it 'improv noise'. Side two is simply unspeakable. Nice Lambkin artwork though...
SJ
[Blackjack, 663 10th St, Oakland, CA 94607, USA]

CONTINGENCE
Dominion
[Deprogrammed Productions CDalbum]
"Dominion" opens with the amazingly dark 'Cynopsis II.C5.1X-V', a surrealist journey into some kind of psychosis. It's not often that these kinds of horror soundtrack-types catches the attention as they've been done to death, but Contingence pull it off with a really disturbing feel. Following this entry, we're treated to some of the hardest driving Cyber this side of FLA, et al. Should definitely be regarded as one of the highest contenders in that area anyway, as they have a definitive edge to their sound and production. It's obvious that this has not been thrown together. There are no real highlights as the whole album is all done so remarkably well. I just find it strange why they haven't been snapped up by a big metal label already. At last someone who's doing the electro-guitar thang really well.
DD
[Deprogrammed Productions, PO Box 46099, Seattle, WA 98146, USA]

v/a
CONTINUUM ASORBUS2
[L'Innome/Sub Rosa CDalbum]
A superb compilation from Sub Rosa that mixes the dark ambience of LILITH and JARDIN D'USURE with the drumming and sound work of TOBIAS HAZAN. Hazan opens with the striking 'Tambour', almost all for solo drum, the intricacy of which is enhanced by clear digital recording. Lilith's track, the 21 minute 'Crystal', is the fourth part of their Stone 'trilogy' and is a collection of very deep rumbling and scraping earth-born waves. It sounds electronic in nature, although, like the "Stone" album proper, was presumably created using only recordings of stone. Then Tobias again, with a soundpiece supposed to recreate the womb-environment that is peculiar and unsettling. Jardin D'Usure close with the 26 minute 'Perforique' that defies description - possibly electro-acoustic, and very droney in an all-enveloping, claustrophobic manner, holding the interest for its duration. In fact, it's almost as if you feel the music with this one rather than actually hear it. Continuum Asorbus^2 utilises a format that works well and is an excellent follow-up to the first collection.
VL
[Sub Rosa, PO Box 808, 1000 Brussels, Belgium]

COPTIC RAIN
Eleven Eleven
[Dynamica CDalbum]
Self described as an industrial art terrorist unit Coptic Rain hit hard with this fusion of metal bashing, electronic and guitar driven sounds. A cross-wiring of electronic, industrial and goth gives this a fresh sound. The best of their songs have harnessed the aggression of punk, the neon blaze of metal and filtered it through the angst ridden minds of their Slovenian psyche. '?Sane?' and 'Mind Cage' are sheer explosions of pent up emotion and must be heard by all. Katrin Radman's vocals are excellent, her contorted delivery working well against the backdrop of post-industrial sounds and complementing the distorted collages of rhythms. "Eleven Eleven" is a totally worthwhile second album by an exceptional outfit and highly recommended.
CB
[Dynamica , Kurfurstenstrasse 23, 10785 Berlin, Germany]

CRAWL/CHILD
Principles of Exclusion
[Freedom In A Vacuum CDalbum]
Shit! These guys are noisy. All things hardcore, funnelled through and blended, is the only way I can define these sort of results. The odd decent sample structure does manage to break through, but not for long, which is rather a shame as you wind up with a noise free-for-all. Art, experimental call it what you will. Me I call it unimaginative bullshit, down with this sort of thing (careful now!).
DM
[Freedom In A Vacuum, Box 862, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2N7, Canada]

CRAWLING WITH TARTS
Sarajevo Center Metal Doors
[Realization CDalbum]
Operas 3 and 4
[ASP CDalbum]
One piece on "Sarajevo..." - the first or second, I forget which - made my 'wife' real mad when I played it late at night: 'What's that noise? There are children trying to sleep here!' etc etc - I was talking to Richo on the phone at the time, yelling at her to shut the fuck up, blah blah blah - kind of a multi-media event, y'know? Anyway, that track's the highlight of the album. The title piece is 37 minutes of subdued clattering, violin tweeting and muted trombone blut - and I don't give a rolling donut for its artistic validity, man, it's wretched, boring, pointless *etcetera etcetera ad infinitum*... "Operas 3 and 4" is another is the series of sound collages principally made up of 'found' discs - old amateur and institutional recordings awash in waves of surface noise, clicks and poots. 'Indian Ocean Ship' is 48 minutes of assorted 'sounds' and is acceptable but by no means compulsive listening - far too long to sustain interest, it works better as background interference. 'Drum Totem' features dullish percussion & some barely audible low-end mumble and is thoroughly disposable. No doubt Crawling with Tarts are working in some potentially interesting areas of sound experimentation, but in my opinion they're self-indulgent and ridiculously over-rated. Ignore these & buy the "Operas" LP.
SJ
[Realization, 9452 Telephone Road #116, Ventura, CA 93004, USA / ASP, PO Box 24908, Oakland, CA 94623, USA]

CROCODILE SHOP
Celebrate The Enemy
[Tinman CDalbum]
Previously heard on Re-Constriction's "Rivet Head Culture" compilation, Crocodile Shop are one of the many U.S. Industrial on the circuit. Minimal programming is the order of the day, which couldn't have taken Chris Randall of Sister Machine Gun too much effort to meld into sound as producer. Only the voice of Mick Hale, which has character and depth, lifts this away from the bottomless pit of wanna-be's. 'Said Said You Said' puts sampled guitar to good use, which for once is what's lacking

on the whole here. Needs development.

DD

[Tinman, PO Box 1114, New Brunswick, NJ 08903-1114, USA]

CUL DE SAC

I Don't Want to Go to Bed

[Flying Nun CDalbum]

As CRANK magazine readers may know, certain Cul de Sac members do not feature in my pantheon of diamond geezers (quote from a letter: "Rumor has it that the spouse of a Cul de Sac member [the one I suspect you have dubbed the 'weasel'] was in a local record store, brought a copy of CRANK up to a clerk and asked him who the publisher was and how could he get away with "printing such lies"...) - I suspect the feeling may be mutual... So, you know, I was not exactly ecstatic at the prospect of 76 minutes of their lo-fi jams and rehearsal blither, but most of it's at least pretty good and some of it's even pretty great. There seem to be an increasing number of bands indulging in lengthy neo-psych/pseudo-Krautrock style jams - Cul de Sac's approach occasionally tends toward the more melodic, but tracks like 'This is the Metal...' builds up a real 'YETI'-like vibe which shouldn't fail to satisfy anyone in search of a heavy duty '70s experimental rock vibe. And I guess if I had to compare them to anyone it would be Amon Duul II (not Faust or Can, sorry Mr Press Officer). In another dimension I might even have recommended it... Things could be a lot worse, you know...

SJ

[Flying Nun, 555 King's Road, London, SW6 2EB, UK]

CURRENT 93 PRESENTS TINY TIM

Songs of an Impotent Troubadour

[Durtro CDalbum]

Surely the oddest and most self-indulgent release yet from David Tibet's 'People I Have Long Worshipped' series. 33 tracks of live-in-the-studio-with-toy-guitar songs and off-the-cuff banter - a love-struck monologue from Tim in which he narrates his tale of those he has adored from afar. The earliest songs stretch back to 1947 and the newest are some written this year. This is extremely voyeuristic in places, captivating in others, but "Songs of an Impotent Troubadour" (the title is *designed* to be taken literally) seems to be of curiosity value only. You'll know by now if you 'need' this or not.

VL

[Durtro, BM Wound, London WC1N 3XX, UK]

CAS DE MAREZ

Cathedrale de Chant

[Barooni CDalbum]

This recording represents the final hour of a fifteen hour solo vocal performance in the Dom Cathedral in Utrecht. Cas de Marez uses a vocal technique that allows for overtones, and for this performance recorded an hour long section into a multitrack tape machine, then playing back and accompanying that hour with more singing, recorded it again, and so on. This final hour has the effect of being a fifteen-strong female choir. Strange effects occur due to the acoustics of the venue and bizarre phasing can be heard in places. This is one the most haunting vocal-only performances I've experienced, the singing being quite alien and unnatural in places (de Marez utilizes whispering and groaning as well as more 'normal' effects).

VL

[Barooni, PO Box 12012, 3501 AA Utrecht, The Netherlands]

DANIELLE DAX

Comatose Non Reaction

[Biter of Thorpe 2CDalbum]

At last, a reissuing of trax I can appreciate, having attended many a Dax gig. Rather than buying her vinyl there's nothing like the 3D effect, live and direct. Ms. Dax, the thwarted pop career, sums it all up, having never quite managed to break into the mainstream (a tad too talented for that methinks) as the planet has only in recent years managed to catch up with her, maybe.., where's she at now. Still, this is re-issueville, the classics are here; 'Yummer Yummer Man', 'Fizzing Human Bomb', 'Cathouse' and more, including four previously unreleased trax. The first of which is some soundtrack material from the film Axel, 1987. Very atmospheric affair, bells and chimes abound painted on a dark synth backdrop and interweaving Dax choral vocal line, whereas the latter three, 'Defiled' and 'Blight' are demo mixes, and the '92 'Mongation' lay down heavy guitar grooves, as heard by the likes of the Malhavoc, Bomb Everything types of late. This is two discs of Dax' oldies that most certainly have stood the test of time, proving what a total talent Ms. Dax was and is. Essential sounds.

DM

[World Serpent Distribution, Unit 717, Seager Buildings, Brookmill Road, London SE8 4HL, UK]

DATA DIRECT

La Dolce Vita

[Discordia CDalbum]

Ever seen La Dolce Vita? A superb film, the main character analysing himself and not liking what he sees yet not being able to change... A real classic but I somehow can't imagine Mr Felini picking this as the soundtrack but maybe he should? I doubt whether any connection to the celluloid is intended but parallels can be found, however the subject matter can be focused in any number of ways. The press release declares Data Direct are trying to "handle the inexpressible" and a damn fine handling it is too. Here we have a superb collection of orchestration both "real" and mechanical. Throwing forth a cacophony of organised mayhem and bubbling mutations of noise. A long term sucker for the saxophone and this sates all my desires - from maniacal outburst to seriously free jazz. A cavalcade of class acts appear on this collaboration including Laibach and Borghesia's Borut Krzisnik, classical violinist Vuk Krakovic and theatre composer and obvious jazz genius Mario Marolt. I pack my bags for Slovenia tonight...

GE

[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

DEATH IN JUNE

Rose Clouds of Holocaust

[NER CDalhum]

How much further Douglas P can take the desperation that screams in silence from the music of Death In June is difficult to measure, but "Rose Clouds of Holocaust" must be fairly close to the limit. From the opening noise-shudder and narration of 'Lord Winter', this album is another descent into the cold and misanthropic world of this tortured individual. Relatively simple songs with less-than-simple lyrical motivations, like the wonderful 'The Accidental Protege' or the (autobiographical?) '13 Years of Carrion'. The instrumentation is particularly rich, taking in the usual guitars and soaring keyboards plus vibraphone, melodica and trumpet. Paradoxically, the overall sound is full of warmth, a strange bedfellow for the despairing lyrics. David Tibet is again present, most notably on the sprawling dream-piece 'Lifebooks' (perhaps a life-summary of his long-term friend and collaborator). "Rose Clouds of Holocaust" is a stunning piece of work from an accomplished master and nothing less than we have come to expect from this single-minded project.

VL

[NER, BM June, London WC1N 3XX, UK]

DELERIUM

Semantic Spaces

[Nettwerk CDalbum]

Delerium of old this is not! What Leeb and Fulber have produced though, is perfection... Almost. "Semantic Spaces" contains two tracks which are indescribably wonderful, these being the single, 'Flowers Become Screens' and 'Incantations'. For those unaware of this new release let me warn you these songs (yes, songs) contain dreamy female vocals. Gorgeously rich, and blissfully smooth, sedate, yet with a tinge of restrained power. Two of the best dance tracks ever. Yes, EVER. "Semantic Spaces" follows in the same vein, but the vocal songs are so good that the rest, largely instrumental, simply pale in comparison. One other feature which is sadly overdone is the obviousness of some of this album's nearest comparison, i.e. Enigma. C'mon, Enigma already created one of the most

stunning sounds, we don't need to experience it again. In its best parts Delerium have furthered the better moments of Intermix and taken them onto another plane entirely. I say, employ Kristy Thirsk to gracefully soar over all Delerium songs in future, and move the project further into chart-worthy territories.
DD
[Nettwerk, Box 330, 1755 Robson St., Vancouver, BC, V6G 3B7, Canada]

DELPHIUM / SHEEPHEAD
Split EP
[Alley Sweeper 7"]
SHEEPHEAD is an impressive-sounding largescale (seven members) US semi-ambient (not as in 'ambient techno', okay?) noise project whose racket resembles nothing in particular (in the abstract as well as concrete sense...). At 6.47 mins it's frustratingly brief - I'd like to hear more. DELPHIUM's latest untitled track (Mr Cuddles - as he now insists everyone call him - sure has a way with snappy titles) is a neat loop/swishy tape-shit cocktail. I'd like to hear a 'proper' Delphium release (ie: something more than endless remixes & untitled tracks on cruddy vinyl - though this is a superb pressing for an American record). All told, an excellent release (numbered edition of 300 by the way).
SJ
[Alley Sweeper, PO Box 361, Clawson, Michigan 48017-0361, USA]

DIE FABRIEK / TELEPHERIQUE
P.W.Z.
[Apocalyptic Vision CDalbum]
Die Fabriek's noise onslaughts are put to good use here. Their deconstructed collages are formed into sonic sculptures and I guess it must be Telepherique who've aided this path with the addition of heavy percussive distortion. "P.W.Z." can be held at the same arm's length as Esplendor Geometrico only these guys are even more extreme. Cranium splitting noise, I even had to turn the volume down! Full-on...
DD
[Apocalyptic Vision, Ahornweg 19, D-64807 Dieburg, Germany]

DIE KRUPPS
Odyssey of the Mind
[Music For Nations CDalbum]
The final transition has been made. "Odyssey..." furthers "The Final Option" album and moves into rockier territories. Dorper's electronics are now secondary, though still evident. Heavy sequenced backing is largely obscured by thrashing guitars, but if you dig deep enough there's a mindstorm of samples and noise way in there. Take 'Isolation' for instance which could so easily be related simply as post-Ministry thrash, but Krupps add metal percussion and pulsing synthetics, rounding the sound perfectly. Engler's vocals are upfront as ever, sidestepping occasionally with a touch of mechanised grind. Krupps are still up there in my mind, and without doubt THE best metal crossover.
DD
[Music For Nations, 333 Latimer Road, London W10 6RA, UK]

DIGITAL POODLE
Noisea 1987-1994
[Cleopatra CDalbum]
Without doubt one of the better examples of cross-Atlantic 'Industrial' to have been spawned, and a good example of an 'I' band veering into techno areas. I lost the thread along the way and missed their last few releases so this Cleopatra compilation is indispensable, with cuts from "Division" and the 'Crack' 12". Blueprint beats, sequences and voiced machinations are worked as a thread which occasionally jar against the odd noise and unexpected tehnoid deformity. Unlike most working in the field the Poodles' didn't resort to bombarding guitars, unless you refer to 'Head Of Lenin' where the guitars are so distorted and far away they become just a slab of machine jargon. Live tracks and remixes move "Noisea" from being just a 'best of', otherwise it would have contained the ambient monster of Zoviet France's 'Soul Crush' remix - not present here, but deserving to be reissued in this current climate of atmospheric doomstations. Digital Poodle, still a stupid name, and definitely worthy of being a name on more lips than they have been.
DD
[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

v/a
THE DIGITAL SPACE BETWEEN VOLUME 2
[Hard Records CDalbum]
Follow-up to the first volume of a year or so ago, this one notably features less big names in the electro-beat genre. X MARKS THE PEDWALK, SPAHN RANCH, 16 VOLT and DIE FORM are probably the best known involved, all offering remixed tracks, as are all the sixteen songs here, all either remixes or completely new. The set really gets going with the third by APOPTYGMA BERZERK who's 'Electronic Warfare' is a blazing trail of sequences and head-on vocals - speedy is the word. ELECTRO ASSASSIN offer one of their least interesting, and F242 soundalike, 'Heavy Unit', while newcomers HAUJOBB show the world the way to go with the slow grinding 'Eye Over You' which is actually not one of their best. There are of course some duffers as any compilation dealing in these areas throw up, being BIRMINGHAM 6 and PANIC ON THE TITANIC, but as Volume 1 was particularly impressive it woud've been very hard to emulate that set.
DD
[Hard Records, C.F. Richs VEJ 122, 2.th, 2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark]

DISLOCATION
Carve Another Notch
[Scatter CDalbum]
This first release from a new Glasgow label dedicated to improvised musics packs quite a punch in the brain-frazzling stakes (so locate and purchase now). Dislocation are a Japanese improv. quartet (electric strings/saxophone/electronics/intermixed action and video), with one CD already on the highly-regarded PSF label, whose sound is quite far removed from their native contemporaries. Tracks one and two, together being the two-part 'Between the Windows of the Sea' last a mere 17 minutes, whereas track three, the title track, is a mite less transitory at nearly 59 minutes. All the instruments work well against one another and there are some very pleasing noises within "Carve Another Notch"'s textural melee. In fact, the experience is not unlike having enormous electrically-charged insects crawl through your head, whilst a slightly less tormented than usual John Zorn serenades you from a distance of no more than six or seven inches. If you see what I mean.
VL
[Scatter, c/o Liam Stefani, 78 West End Park Street, Glasgow G3 6LJ, UK]

DIVINATION
Akasha
[Subharmonic 2CDalbum]
The new Divination project of Laswell, together with Mick Harris, Haruomi Hosono and others, is split down the centre and a disc of 'Ambient' and another, 'Rhythm'. Disc One is aglow, just as the red, yellow, brown image burns light from the cover. Long forming frequencies rise, moving slowly as bells and strings awaken within. The final track of the four, 'Stir' is the least moving, barely visible, as daylight finally diminishes. Disc Two rises quickly, disorienting as though wakening from a nightmare. Solid rhythms emerge from the scourging screams, amassing in numbers while noises wail and break away. No let up for 'Navigations' either, though perhaps more soothing in its electronic nature - even touching on trance. Lastly 'Illuminoid Assassin' is a nightmare in itself. Fast and frantic percussive elements drive for virtually all of its sixteen minutes. Strangely though this track also includes moments of beauty as pipes melt into the frenzy. In all another fine collection in the series, though the three tracks collating 'Rhythm' far outweigh the

ambience for adding a new dimension, and thus making it less of a whole than previous work.

DD

[Subharmonic, 180 Varick Street, New York, NY 10014, USA]

DREADZONE

Second Light

[Virgin Records CDalbum]

So far to my ears, these guys have done no wrong since leaving the good ship B.A.D. They bring dub roaring back into the 90's, offering a positive out look from the opening track, 'Life, Love and Unity', a message to us all in these times of governmental restraint of movement, and the right to public protest. 'Little Britain''s violin section supplies a totally uplifting sensation, tinted with a Gaelic influence, all encompassed by one of the premium rhythms, and bass melodies, which hold a constant high standard throughout, proving that dub can be integrated and interwoven with any musical genre. There sure is a kaleidoscope of images, the more rural sounding 'Canterbury Take', to the sea shanty-esque 'Capt. Dread' which would even have old Birdseye demanding shore leave to hit the festival circuit. 'Cave of Angels' has a more hypnotic, spiritual theme. The second half of this album metamorphs into the more techno side of Dreadzone. The single 'Zion Youth' is a real toe tapping tune if ever there was one, compared to the totally chill-out one way 'Shining Path' and 'Out of Heaven'. 9 trax of sheer dubbish bliss. Musical Prozac.

DM

[Virgin Records - in your favourite music store around the globe]

DRIFT PIONEER

Metal Elf Boy

[T.E.Q. MUSIC? CDalbum]

Fluid, hypnotic dance music covering a wide spectrum of the techno/ambient/electronica axis yet still spiralling off on a singular pathway of its own. "Metal Elf Boy" contains six languorous tracks (in 70 minutes) of pulsing, liquid machine-creations that are quite dazzling: laidback, but possessing an intensity of rhythm that is almost unique. This music *will* ensnare you, whatever you're doing. William Cheshire is a man with a mission - and I'm 100% happy to go along with that. "Metal Elf Boy" is a most impressive debut and Drift Pioneer a name to watch out closely for. Success can only be around the next corner. More (very soon) please!

VL

[T.E.Q. Music?, PO Box 87, Ilford, Essex IG1 3HJ, UK]

JEAN-MARIE DUCHENNE

Feuillets D'Album

[Metamkine CDsingle]

A difficult one... Some disconnected gibbering and loud duck calls get this underway, but there's a heavy 'blabbering old crackbaggy' content which resurfaces with dismaying regularity. That I could easily live without, especially as the old crackbaggy's either blabbering in some French dialect I've never heard before or it's been fucked with in some subtle way - which is more than possible, given this series. Whatever, I'm too stupid to figure it out. Worth adding to the pile, but less essential than some...

SJ

[Metamkine,13 rue de la Drague, 38600 Fontaine, France]

v/a

E.A.R. PROJECT

[Discordia CDalbum]

The best thing about this compilation is that it has an unreleased VANISHING HEAT track, 'Undertow' which furthers their sonic expulsions on our own "The Itch". So, with just one track alone is well worth the price of admission. I guess I should really tell you about the other stuff as well, but nothing compares to Vanishing Heat! SHADE FACTORY offer two tracks of hard sequences and hard vocals - not bad. SIMBOLO from Brazil are less harder, concentrating on the creation of more alternative electronics. PATTERNCLEAR which is Phil Clarke, one-half of old Stress. I really don't know how to put this plain enough? Phil you cannot sing, your voice is just not strong enough. Please do not sing. As an electronic pop musician you are more than proficient, and your tunes are immensely enjoyable. Your lyrics are pretty good, but please, please, please get a vocalist to sing them. Ten years ago you might have got away with it, but not now... NEAR DEATH-EXPERIENCE and their lo-fi electronics are a poppier Borghesia, while EXTERIOR MIRROR's electro-style is much more current through dislocated pulses and weird vocals. I would have appreciated some info. on this band, but alas there's none to be found. Finishing up is the mighty SMERSH who do to techno, what Smersh have done all their lives.., fuck it up. And what a great fuck-up 'Double Bubble' is. More energy in its nine minutes alone than the rest of this compilation, excepting Vanishing Heat of course.

DD

[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

EAT STATIC

Epsylon

[Planet Dog CDsingle]

A disappointing album, but this, in a shorter dose is much more acceptable. The title track is a bass-heavy number, and actually exudes a little noise around those smooth edges. The second cut, 'Dionysiac' is apparently a 'radical new angle on jungle'. Well, I'm sorry just including jungle beats does not mean a new angle at all. If you really want to hear a new angle, listen to 'Swimmer' on our own Drift Pioneer album. 'Undulattice (Uforic Remix)' moves through a sub-acid set and closes this 36 minute excursion.

DD

[Planet Dog, 271 Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 9LU, UK]

ECONOLINE CRUSH

Affliction

[EMI Canada CDalbum]

Rhys (Front Line Assembly, etc. etc. etc) Fulber knows how to choose cool bands to work with, first Fear Factory and now Econoline Crush. Econoline Crush come from Vancouver, and when they played over here recently the flyers read - "featuring members of Skinny Puppy and Front Line Assembly", but a shock was waiting for anyone who believed this bullshit. True enough Rhys produced, mixed and played keyboards on this recording and his influence is somewhat noticeable, but when I spoke to the band they were extremely pissed off with the twats sporting 'Puppy tee-shirts who hassled them for not being 'Puppies' and the big mistake the promoters made! Anyway the Crush are far from an industrial band and would probably be cheesed-off with anyone who pigeon-holed them. The CD starts off with a fucked-up intro that usually accompanies Canadian bands and you might even expect distorted vocals - think again!! 'Nowhere Now' (the first song) catches you by surprise with a gut wrenching guitar riff and vocals that remind of Faith No More, while songs like the haunting "Close" and the chaotic "Cruel World" with their intelligent lyrics and catchy choruses will be setttng a trend for the future. The overall sound combines the aggressive nature of caged wolves with the atmosphere usually attributed to heavenly angels, to quote my wife, "Bangy, bouncy and spacey." Vocalist Trevor Hurst underlined with heavy duty assaults from guitar, bass, live drums and Rhys' apocalyptic keys create a pedestal from which Econoline Crush can spit at any critics that may try to slag them off! It's not often that an album packed full of good moments is released, but this is sex, this is god, this is fucking superb. This is... I'm bloody lost for words.

SS

[EMI Music Canada, 3109 American Drive, Mississauga, Ontario, L4V 1BZ, Canada]

EDEN

Fire & Rain

[Projekt CDalbum]

Long-awaited full follow-up to the amazing "Gateway To The Mysteries" on Third Mind. Could it be possible that "Fire & Rain"

would surpass the richness of that album? I think the answer may possibly be a resounding 'yes'. Sean Bowley's vocals have seen to that, with a bewitching smooth glow, a silken gauze enwrapped around the changeable traditional and ethnic instrumentation. Darker touches are found throughout, reaching beyond the poppier elements of their previous work - judge the atmospheric air of one their older songs, 'Stretched On Your Grave' as updated here. Sean and Peter are aided by the bass and guitars of Ewan McArthur and Tracy Ellerton, respectively, which both adds depth and completes the frame of sounds perfectly. Even rockier elements have a habit of breaking through, 'Just Like Water; You Run From My Eyes!' grabbing ahold as the last breath is squeezed from this beautifully crafted collection of 'songs' - songs being just what they are, with that faint hint of subversity. From Australia, outback, "Fire & Rain" should be out-front.
DD
[Projekt, Box 1591, Garden Grove, CA 92642-1591, USA]

EDF
Number Three
[Fringe Product CDalbum]
Despite owning a particularly cliched moniker - Electronic Dream Factory - one Rob Stuart, ex-UK, now native in Canada, has rather less of a cliched sound. He mixes styles, producing an album which neither sits comfortably in a U.S. Industrial scenario, nor a techno-dancier frame. Recording all his work digitally in his own Toronto studio the distorted beats and vocals have an added sheen, which surprisingly increase the dirtier grooves. "Number Three" does show its influences a little too much though; he rips off a Human League rhythm track lock stock and barrel on 'Move To The Beat' and the Eighties' feel is further apparent through a cover of Gary Numan's 'Films', which is actually rather good. It's pleasing to know someone is not scared of revealing his love of Numan though - me too, up to but not beyond "Dance"! Weighing up the pros and cons, I'd have to rate "Number Three" above the average, and if there were more tracks which played around with the harder side of electro-pop such as 'This Is My Exorcism' then it would be recommended further. The sleeve is positively crap though!
DD
[Fringe Product, PO Box 670, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1G2, Canada]

ELD
Carved
[Discordia CDalbum]
Praise the Lord an acoustic opening - yes MFTEQ will have a folk column one day! Swedes' ELD offer a gentle collection of laid back folk. Ochs and Dylan this is not, just your basic songs about the sea and the heart and soul but musically this is so pleasant it hurts. Drifting guitar lapping gently across the seas, reaching a shore of Celtic flutes and dreams of wilderness and wasteland. Makes me want to find a deserted field somewhere, a cold bottle of wine and contemplate the universe. All in all quite beautiful, a touch of gentleness in this sick and sordid world. I shall deliver my psyche to Sweden.
GE
[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

THE ELECTRIC HELLFIRE CLUB
Kiss The Goat
[Cleopatra CDalbum]
Anyone who's still heartbroken over the last couple of Thrill Kill Kult's albums, should wipe away those tears and go out and buy "Kiss the Goat". For it is Thomas Thorn (Buck Ryder in his previous life) who leads the Hellfire Club, into a melting pot of drugs, death and the devil. A deviant lifestyle which reflects in this gorgeous deathly dose of electronics, guitars and worship. It gets a little OTT at times, track titles like 'Bitchcraft' and 'Creepy Crawler' are so obvious, but the band seems sincere in their occultist beliefs, so we'll forgive them for that. The music itself is suitably heavy enough to pull it all off, otherwise looking as they do, The Electric Hellfire Club could easily get put into the same campy category as TKK. Extremely good.
DD
[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

v/a
ELECTRONIC YOUTH VOL. 3
[Music Research CDalbum]
Fifteen tracks of machine tooled techno by as many different acts, some very good, AMGOD, GISMO ('Dogma 3 Remix'), NETWORK ACCESS, SHEEP IN THE ABATTOIR, ANGST POP, VIVA TA VIE and VOICE OF DESTRUCTION - Visions of the future, but the rest, which aren't even worth mentioning, failing dismaly. Like so many electronic compilations "Electronic Youth Vol 3" starts to outstay its welcome and ultimately feels like the same brain numbing track on repeat. Definitely a case of electronic act after electronic act going round in the same loop of circuitry. So much so that I thought it was mostly the same group of people changing its name every track because it was too tired to change its sound. Only buy this if you are a techno-junkie with more money than sense, far better would be for you to investigate in the new Lights of Euphoria album (who incidentally don't feature here) which comes from the same stable.
CB
[Zoth Ommog, Norsk-Data-Str. 3, 61352 BAD Homburg, Germany]

ELpH vs COIL
Worship The Glitch
[Eskaton CDalbum]
Another round in the (possibly) ongoing 'battle' between Coil and the, ahem, 'mysterious' ELpH... The last conversation I had with Mr Balance - at the Tony Conrad/Faust concert if you must know - we ended up talking about the 'a' word: I babbled some moronic drivel about being 'into' 'ambient'. I figured he thought I was taking the piss & made what I assumed to be a sarcastic rejoinder along the lines of 'Oh, we've just done an ambient album'... Ha ha ha. Well, here it is. I guess. If so, then many upstart purveyors of the 'a' word could learn a thing or two by taking a listen (I mean, I *presume* it's an 'ambient' album, if you have to call it something - the word's already about as conceptually useful as 'rock' so I'd like to stop using it if you don't mind; it *is* ambient in the Oxford Dictionary sense, though it doesn't seem like anyone's ever actually bothered to look up the fucking word...). Jesus, got a bit tangled up there... Anyway, the only other recent recording I've heard that comes close to it is Aurobindo's "Involution", which isn't 'ambient' either... The music/sound is pure, often stark, electronica - no flabby layers of bilious keyboard overkill, no sub-Eno-by-numbers droning - but plenty of that funny business that sends critics scurrying off to their Thesaurus for words like 'plangent' (or even 'lambent', or even 'ringent'...). Ah, fuck it, whatever it is, it's an outstanding release, subtle and insidious, demanding (and replaying) multiple listenings. An exceptional entry in Coil's discography - this particular glitch is unreservedly recommended.
SJ
[Eskaton, BM CODEX, London WC1N 3XX, UK]

v/a
EM:T 2295
[T:me Recording CDalbum]
From one of the most stylish homes of New Electronica comes another high fidelity compilation hybrid. THOMAS KONER chews the cud, so too SCANNER, COCO STEEL & LOVEBOMB, WOOB and GAS, the big boys. SYMETRICS open the gate, lying spread-eagled across the grass, munching away on a happy groove, hence the funny faces for a track title. CELIA GREEN gives some 'advice to clever children', and it's not 'don't pull the Bull's nose-ring little Johnny', but an essay on psychological interaction and social acceptability, and all that high-brow kind of motivational bullsh.., er.., I mean material. BAD DATA bring the herd back into line to chill before P-EYE-EYE get 'Lost At Sea' and jazz-out in spasmic bursts. Then, for all that activity we go to ground for

the closing STRAWBERRY GIRL debating the future of this reality. 65 minutes of entertainment all wrapped up with the prettiest frog you ever did see...

DD

[T:me Recording, Square Centre Studios, 389-394 Alfred Street North, Nottingham NG3 1AA, UK]

v/a
ENCHANTMENTS
[Cleopatra Records CDalbum]

16 noticeably more danceable tracks than one would normally expect from the Cleopatra camp. Plenty of high calibre material supplied by DIGITAL POODLE, DIE KRUPPS, LAIBACH, SPAHN RANCH and many more, noticeably FLA's 'Immobilized' taken from the retrospective, "Total Terror II", originally on Dossier. Leeb/Fulber also appear courtesy of NOISE UNIT's 'Kick To Kill'. Large scale stompability also via the reminiscing of PENAL COLONY's 'Blue Nine', which has certainly been stamped FLA. Possibly the only flaw about the package is the fact that there seems to be a constant FLA influence on most of the lessor known outfits - but that's not a bad thing even in its slower moments. Question is, has it all passed its sell by date? Or should we slam till we're spam!

DM

[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

EPILEPSY
Rozois
[Paragoric CDalbum]

As the boudaries of metal and electronics are diverging more and more Epilepsy's doomy blend of synthetics and slashing guitars finds itself a market from within both camps extremely well. Their use of electronics is especially wholesome and not used as a mere backdrop. The band's slower numbers don't endear themselves too much as the vocals are just so death metal, but when, on tracks such as 'Delisces Steits' the leash is off there's a hardness added which moves on at a fair speed. In fact in this form they're one of the best Ministryesque hardcores I've heard, and I've heard a few! Drop the death and I'd recommend Epilepsy to anyone.

DD

[Paragoric, Ketterlerstr. 4, 95652 Waldsassen, Germany]

THE ESCAPE
Every Tear Dries
[Celtic Circle Productions CDalbum]

Time to take another ride in a dusty cobweb strewn hearse, this time with The Escape. The Escape are Elten, Ingo Klemens and Heiko Wersing, they look dark and mysterious. "Every Tear Dries" is soft-goth with titles such as in 'Lords of the Dark Horizon' and 'Shine On', they could be dark and mysterious? Alas this sound is neither doom laden nor shining. Go on then, get in my pale faced one, but heed this, it goes nowhere - for it is stuck in Goth's rutted highway.

CB

[Celtic Circle Productions, PO Box 7113, 47601 Geldern, Germany]

ESPLENDOR GEOMETRICO
Nador
[Daft Records CDalbum]

These sonic sculptures could only be made by the Spanish leaders in percussive onslaughts.
Recorded between 1988 and 1989 these follow much the same route as their other works, being primarily experiments in electronic rhythm and altered frequencies. Once a track is off and running there's nothing much that will get in its way, just a solid beating from start to finish. And by the end of this 50 minute work-out you'll feel like you've been beaten into submission. There's fun to be had...

DD

[Daft Records, Stationsstraat 116, 9120 Beveren, Belgium]

EVA
Extra Vehicular Activity
[Kickin Records CDalbum]

The sample from a Houston 'lift-off' sequence should have given the game away, but after the first six minutes of 'Thirty One Seconds' the three lads, who are EVA, plunge a sub-jungle beat into the ambience, moving the track somewhere else entirely. That somewhere else is a fusion of ambience, hip-hop and dub, with a few jazzy licks for good (or bad, as I find them unnecessary) measure. Some of the tracks are overlong at around 10, 11, 12 minutes and for all their playing around with styles become a bit formulaic, i.e. commencing as a strand of, say, ambience, then breaking off into something else after 4, 5, 6 minutes. It just becomes a bit too obvious. You know that something else is going to happen and take the track away from its intended route. For example, 'M.A.U.S.' which contains the album best spacey moments for 3, 4 minutes, breaks away into a trip-hop dub. This album is inventive but I don't think its' instigators really have control of that alternative edge to make their material work properly. Only one of the three has a background in electronic music and it shows. Still, this is as good an album as half of the other trendier UK labels are providing.

DD

[Kickin Records, Unit 1 Acklam Workshops, 10 Acklam Road, London W10 5QZ, UK]

v/a
EXPLORATION ONE
[Body & Blood Exploration CDalbum]

A spirited collection of power electronics recordings [more properly called 'death industrial' now, it would appear). Eleven exclusive tracks from such international names as IUGULA-THOR, BRIGHTER DEATH NOW, DEUTSCH NEPAL and CON-DOM. It's odd how 'relaxing' a lot of this material becomes upon repeated listening. The elements of rhythm and clear repetition are in some way responsible for this effect: notably both ANENZEPHALIA and DEUTSCH NEPAL use loops to achieve impressive ends. The only duffer here is 'Threat Sequence' from the frankly laughable INTRINSIC ACTION, who seem to have made a career out of the 'it's-so-extreme-it's-funny' approach. Italian maestros SIGILLUM S round things off nicely with a track that breaks the mould of the previous blood-offerings, proof that the best of these acts aren't part of *any* 'scene' but firmly ensconced in their own parallel universes: the suitably enigmatic-sounding 'Hardest Plans of Gorgeous Derangements' dares to feature a backwards drum track and melodic feedback guitar over liquefying electronics. A classic SS track to end a compilation with plenty to satisfy the hardened noise-addict and much to initiate the curious.

VL

[Body & Blood Exploration, c/o Praveer Baijal, PO Box 670, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada]

EYELESS IN GAZA
Streets I Ran
[A-Scale CDalbum]

A mini-album which is related to their "Saw You In Reminding Pictures" set. This time vocals play a full role and Bates' voice rides and soars all over the backing of rhythmless acoustics. Though nothing should be taken away from Becker's compositions. Excellent as always.

DD

[A-Scale, PO Box 3, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 9YT, UK]

FACEFAIL
Comfort Hiding Crime
[Facefail CDalbum]

Metal guitars and raw, unprocessed Trent Reznor-inspired vocals have been the primary cuisine dished out in the US cybereateries, but once in a while the chef serves up something that's not on the menu. The specialty of the month is Facefail. Instead of cloning the major synthrock icons, Facefail is an amalgamation of more cult projects like Legendary Pink Dots, In The Nursery and the folk elements from the Current 93 camp. Acoustic guitars, pianos, tribal drumming, and a river of electronics are

part of their instrumental package, while the vocals sway from ambient crooning to angst-bloated screams. Only 'Bloody Nail' fits in with the club circuit, but even this track shares the impressive sense of dynamics that permeates the rest of this disc.
R-M
[Facefail, 4205 Winton Dr., Hoffman Estates, IL 60195, USA]

THE FACTORY PRESS
Interstate
[ND CDsingle]
Something of a departure for ND this one (apart from the fact that they've released a single by this four-piece as well). Downward-looking 'rock' music with Joy Division leanings, especially in the vocal department. Five guitar/bass/drums/voice songs in 25 minutes, with a string trio on 'Black Thorn Blades'. There's nothing outstanding here, and the merest hint of country twang on 'Under the Gun' is pretty distasteful if you're asking. The rest is 'pleasant' enough, if a little mundane and overlong. Attractive ND sleeve, though, as you'd expect.
VL
[N D, PO Box 4144, Austin, TX 78765, USA]

FADING COLOURS
Lie
[Dion Fortune Records CDsingle]
Fading Colours take their cue, and their colouring, from the airbrushed guitar sound that is the hallmark of Simple Minds and U2. However comparing them to these stadium rockers is a bit of an injustice since Fading Colours deliver better than the aforementioned bands, largely due to the powerful female vocals. Overall a fairly interesting debut with sufficiently broad appeal. An album from these Polish tunesmiths is soon to follow, it could be a blinder. A moody listen and up there with some of the best Dion Fortune acts.
CB
[Dion Fortune Records, Hopeltstr. 66, 5000 Koln 30, Germany]

FANGER & SIEBERT
[Fax CDalbum]
This CD is mastered so softly that I really had to crank up the volume to catch anything. But once the sounds begin to emerge this has something of an explosive quality. Another of the label's minimal offerings, but carrying enough force in the percussive department to drag it through the ambient depths. Short attacking sequences load the opening 'And Suddenly', and with its archaic drum-tones makes the track sound quite dated, belonging somewhere in 1982-83 Portion Control's catalogue. 'Hinuit' borders sub-trance levels, stuttering through a monotonal drone. 'Conspiracy' halts, and sends out patterned signals, pulsing in cycles. The long 'Future Dub' adds speed, being a drawn-out percussion track with jazzy minimality. 'The Cage' has the richest tones which kick-starts and spirals infinitely. 'Esala' is a menacing journey, again pulsing, but with rather more darkness - its tribal tones leaning towards dub. The closing 'Twinkling Oasis' leaves brightness in its place, a high-tone piece with drifting synthetic voices. Thomas Fanger and Jan Siebert have produced one of the best Fax releases ever here and I'd have to accept Namlook's description of "a brilliant masterpiece".
DD
[Fax: +49 69 450464]

AVOCADO SUITE

FEAR FACTORY
Demanufacture
[Roadrunner CDalbum]
I guess this is the album which Front Line Assembly didn't make (or haven't yet)? A ferosive workout of speedcore and technology. The musical side being so breathtaking that even the moments of grating (should read: boring) Death Metal vocals get forgotten along the way. Mixed, of course, by Rhys Fulber and Greg Reely.
DD
[Roadrunner Records, Suites W & T, Tech West Centre, 10 Warple Way, Acton, London W3 0UL, UK]

FIELD DAY
Friction
[Modern Music CDalbum]
I slip back into 1976 all too easily for the liking of some but damnit I'm a sucker for a good pogo. These guys have in places the energy of '76 but the control of later years with some mean little guitar lines - their only flaw being vocally, too safe in places and even Ramonesy at one point (YUK!!). Almost plastic and disposable but I love it. Lyrically competent without fail, right from the heart and gut - 'Job' and 'Grant' most memorable. Undoubtedly they will be placed under New Wave/Indie which is a shame as I feel these lads have a lot more to offer than fickle guitar kitsch. If you appreciate a good song and a bit of guitar pop Field Day are your boys.
GE
[Modern Music, Kurfurstenstr. 23, 10785 Berlin, Germany]

FOETUS IN EXCELSIS CORRUPTUS
!Male!
[Visionary VIDEO]
84 minutes of pure rawk'n'roll from the God that is FOETUS. Far more confrontational live than on record, this document witnesses the ultimate line-up of Westberg, Kizys and Ouimet trawling through the grime. 'Faith Healer', 'English Faggot', 'Anything', 'Death Rape 2000' all fresh on the hook... Blood raw. "ACCEPT IT BEFORE IT DESTROYS YOU!!!"
DD
[Visionary, PO Box 30, Lytham St Annes, FY8 1RI, UK]

FORD PROCO
Fragmentos De Ocio En El Hocico Del Cerdo
[Opcion Sonica CDalbum]
Oh yes... A Mexican Esplendor Geometrico! All the ingredients are here; savage rhythms, unfathomable vocals and anthemic synths. Ford Proco are less full-frontal though and on some tracks come across as Laibach, or on a lower level an EBM band of a few years back with their use of heavy sequences. A good album in all, with a variety of sounds to hold it away from monotony.
DD
[Opcion Sonica, Tamaulipas # 125-23, Col. Condensa, Mexico D.F., C.P. 06140]

FORTRAN 5
Avocado Suite
[Mute Records CDalbum]
David Baker and Simon Leonard are travelling the same path that various ex-members of Wire have been down, with varying degrees of success. What is, I think, their third album, "Avocado Suite", was recorded at their own Rubber Nurse studio and is further evidence that Fortran 5 have now completely lost the plot. Armed with a lexicon of samples surreal enough to keep a psychoanalyst in productive employment for years to come and with equally meaningless track titles such as 'Radmen' and 'Domewitch' this is a thoroughly weird affair. As if by random chance Fortran 5 seem ever so wilfully obscure and if you ever wanted to hear what an untamed Korg MS20 synth sounded like at full frequency but were too afraid to ask, well 'MS20' is what you have been waiting for. The closing trio of 'Alan's Ex', 'VP330' (a Roland VP-330 Human Voice) and 'And Erm' have invaded my player for ever and the kitsch bathroom suite cover is so... well, it's not sweet but it's certainly cool and avacado. Why Avocado Suite? David: It was the only possible name. How is that? Simon: It was like after the Rad men changed the lightbulb. I agree entirely guys. Highly disturbing and not a bit serious.
CB
[Mute Records, 429 Harrow Road, London W10 4RE, UK]

FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING
Party Size!
[Commercial Failure CDalbum]

I'm always dubious about labels with names like 'We're No Good' or 'Incapable of Producing Decent Music' - too often it's tempting fate... Luckily, Commercial Failure's first release steers clear of the smartass self-congratulatory smegma befouling President's Breakfast - both combos are SF weirdos, but FFPB aren't the kind who sport their 'I'm So Fucking Weird You Should Kiss Me' badges like lobotomy scars... In fact, barring two stoopid tracks (both near the beginning and one featuring fucking accordion - blockhead instrument of the issue!) "Party Size" pretty much grabs you and maintains its hold throughout. And for once here's a group experimenting with various forms/sonic textures who haven't ended up with an album sounding like an anthology - there's an overall coherency & continuity that comes as a more than pleasant surprise. A quick listen to the opening 'Junk In Orbit Threat to New Stations' (which actually sounds like its title) or 'Nasa Engineer' should be enough to convince... Michael Gendreau from Crawling With Tarts appears on a few tracks.

SJ

[Commercial Failure, 3240 17th St, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA]

FRAGMENTED
Set
[BlueNitesEroticSecrets Records CDalbum]

fragmented
set

What a label name! I hoped this would be 71 minutes of gerbil sex sounds but no such luck. "Set" is heavily 'atmospheric' discreet(ish) home-experimentalism and sort of post-goth angst-ridden bedroom incontinence...Titles like 'The Essence of Agony' and 'Needles in Flesh' don't help, nor does a crummily utilised drum machine. Many tracks extend way beyond tolerance level, continuing long after they've sucked the marrow from already skeletal ideas. Mr Anx.scan's tape manipulations are a lot more interesting than his dreadful guitar twanging which he indulges in far too frequently, and his seeming delight in 'sinister' whispering & muttering is close to a felony offence. Once upon a time this would have been confined to a cassette or LP release (edition of 67) which only Seymour Glass and Ron Lessard would have heard. Now we can all share in the benefits of cheap CD manufacturing. Three cheers for technology.

SJ

[BlueNitesEroticSecrets, 1512 Canyon Run Rd, Naperville, IL 60565, USA]

FREAK'S AMOUR
Descarte's Ruse
[Nart Products CDalbum]

FA has obviously reconsidered its position as 'Connecticut's Premier Improvisational Music Ensemble' ("No overdubs. Once is enough" said the first LP - I guess as they're no longer CT residents they're allowed to change their minds) and gone for a combination of sampled poop constructions, MIDI sequenced manipulations and some live improvisations with occasional overdubs. Is an improvisation still an improvisation if you overdub onto it? How many freaks can dance on the keyboard of a sampler? How many CD's of 'weird' shit produced by nutters in their bedrooms can I fit into my shelves? More to the point, how many recordings of this nature can a 'reviewer' digest without ending up like Seymour Glass? Actually, this runs the whole gamut of bedroom turpitude - some of it's weird, wild and innovative, some has good ideas that outlast their welcome, some would compel me to leap for the 'search' button if I wasn't being 'forced' to listen... The sampler-produced swill is the most offensive, particularly as these tracks seem to be a vehicle for Mr Freak's insistent, almost Zoogz Rift-style bleating. What the hell, it's probably objectionable enough to be worth hearing once...

SJ

[Nart Products, 230 West 82St, Apt 2D, New York, NY 10024, USA]

FREIBURGER SPIELLEYT
Tales Of Miracles
[Glasnost CDalbum]

Music for the spiritually lost. The ensemble that is Freiburger Spielleyt play medieval music on a blend of historical instruments and synthesisers. Essentially the synths are used to create atmospheric backdrops to the traditional flutes, bagpipes, harps etc. "Tales Of Miracles" features a modern interpretation of songs from 'Cantigas de Santa Maria', a famous Spanish art collection, of religious content, dating from the late thirteenth century. It works quite well on some of the tracks but whatever the undoubted merits of Freiburgers' musicallity and ability the album's late 13th century classicism may prove daunting to most and with a running time of nearly an hour it gets a bit much in one listen. In fact five minutes at a time was really enough for me. For fans of medieval music, however, it should reward.

CB

[Glasnost, Glockengiesserwall 17, D-20095 Hamburg, Germany]

EDGAR FROESE
Beyond The Storm
[Virgin Records 2CDalbum]

Enormous collection of Froese' solo material recorded over two decades. For all its mellow moods, it does wallow a little in Progishness with just a few too many synth fanfares for its own good. Has moments of sheer splendour and on the whole is more than just an enjoyable excursion.

DD

[Virgin Records - in your favourite music store around the globe]

v/a
FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM
[Direction Music VIDEO]

This 60 minute, six artist video from Direction Music seems like an unusual, but potentially worthwhile recipe for success. Until you actually sit down and view the thing, that is. The music ranges from the very good - MAEROR TRI - mystical liquefying electronics, COLIN POTTER - post-industrial creepiness and PLANT BACH OFNUS - a mantric repeated cello phrase with wonderful sampled voices, to almost New Age saccharine sweetness from KEVIN O'NEILL (whose track 'Shining water' is accompanied by (wait for it) scenes of running water - gosh!) and ROBERT ANDREWS (tired acoustic guitar meandering). Rural scenes abound, not surprisingly given the 'ambient' nature of much of the music. Perversely though, I found myself turning *away* from the screen to concentrate on the music itself, so distractingly banal are the images sometimes. The camera work is quite shaky in places and it leaves the entire production with a very amateurish feel. The soundtrack is also available from the label on cassette - a much better prospect if you like any of the above names. A nice idea, unfortunately lacking the quality required to make it a success.

VL

[Direction Music, 28 Nant Y Felin, Pentraeth, Anglesey, Gwynedd LL75 8UY, UK}

v/a
FROM TRANCE TO CYBER
[Opcion Sonica CDalbum]

'An electro Mexican compilation'... A perfect introduction to the techno/trance/crossover scene in Mexico. Thirteen bands, all home-grown fitting the band-width. LLT offer some wholesome hard house on their track 'Tom Tom Mix', as do DECADA 2 and 29. Trance is covered well by BOSTISCH. Much 'cyber' is in evidence; from the relatively well-known ARTEFAKTO (Zoth Ommog licensed them), CENOBITA's cyanide-laced 'Genetica Mecanica' and the rhythmic DEUS EX MACHINA. One oddity is 'Dodo' by INTERFACE which would be more at home on a metal compilation with its guitar barbs and gravel vocals. Still, if anyone wants to check out what's happening down in Mexico then this is a good starting point.

DD

[Opcion Sonica, Tamaulipas # 125-23, Col. Condensa, Mexico D.F., C.P. 06140]

FUCKHEAD
Video Arena
[Paragroic CDalbum]

Apart from getting my 'best band name' of the issue award, this bunch of Austrians lick the carcasses of Switzerland's early Young Gods and Melx. Slowcore guitars, out of body vocals and overall fury, crawling over track titles such as 'Winged Sperm Disperser' and 'The Circumcision'. Not as draining as it could be as Fuckhead soften the load with back-dropped electronics which pull the sound away from the mosh-pit. The band steer away from ridiculous death metal vocals and concentrate purely on spewing anger, and it works. An inventive use of percussion also enhances, as does the uncluttered production. Not the bloody pulp it could be, and pretty remarkable for it.
DD
[Paragoric, Ketterlerstr. 4, 95652 Waldsassen, Germany]

FUDGE TUNNEL
In A Word
[Earache Records CDalbum]

Absolutely 'must have' release. Fudge Tunnel are THE premier rock/grunge/noise fuckers in THE whole universe! "Hate Songs..." still is a classic and "In A Word" gets close to its supremecy. Peel sessions and live tracks power on and you really just want to grab the nearest speaker and ram your head through it.., getting closer to the grime. 'Bed Crumbs', 'Spanish Fly', 'Tipper Gore', a deathly cover of Sabbath's 'Changes', all we needed was another 'Like Jeff' or 'Sunshine Of Your Love'. Rawk 'n'roll. When your fed up with the grind reach for the rush of Fudge Tunnel.
DD
[Earache Records, PO Box 144, Nottingham NG3 4GE, UK]

FULL IMMERSION:
The Remixes Vol.1
[Swim CDalbum]

I've seen far too many reviews just pick up on the fact that there are so many big names featured here; G-MAN, MARK GAGE, MICK HARRIS... You've all ignored the obvious. Newman and Spigel are Immersion. They provided the raw materials. Bloody excellent raw materials too - one of the most exciting albums to filter through the Techno boom, and ultimately an album which will last way beyond this latest trend. The remix project has been an ongoing affair ever since "Oscillating" hit the streets. A posse of artists were/are falling over themselves to take a knife to the deepest soundwaves you're likely to hear. Have they really added anything to the original sound? Well, I'm not sure to be honest. G-Man's 'Envelope' is maybe a touch darker than the original and 'Slow Drift' reworked by Claude Young is further disjointed. Gianelli as Telepathic offers a subtle groove to 'Water Walker', while Mick Harris dissolves 'Walkabout' into an inevitable drift piece with edgy percussion. Mark Gage makes 'Oscillating Between' sound like a Plastikman track, whilst Iris offends 'Oscillating' by tuning into a funk track, holding firmly by the teeth and not letting go. Maybe I'm just not too much a fan of remixes that I still prefer the original album, even when for all the faults (which I can see simply because I'm no fan of remixes!) this is still way beyond what anyone else is creating. So, reluctantly it has to be album of this issue (though, if I could I'd nominate last issue's "Oscillating" as this issue's!), especially as the last track is an 'alternative mix' of 'Oscillating Between' by Immersion themselves. Just feel their vibe reel slowly around the body, no-one does it better.
DD
[Swim, PO Box 3459, London SW19 6ES, UK]

v/a
THE FUTILITY OF A WELL ORDERED LIFE
[Alternative Tentacles CDalbum]

17 trax for the price of a CDsingle, compiled by Bill Gilliam and Mr Dead Kennedy himself Jello Biafia The general feel of majority the of trax is early '80's US Punk Rock which in some cases is more just bad metal; that bastard guitarist is just dying to let rip with a solo, though I think that all goes under the title of grunge these days. Some well bandied names here, DOA's, 'Already Dead''s a real pogo, ALICE DONUT, and NO MEANS NO supply the more modern equivalents. Biafia's everywhere on those with his side projects TUMOR CIRCUS, the co-ops with Ministry in the shape of LARD, and the wild west ho down with MOJO NIXON, a reworking of that old classic 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' title, WILL THE FOETUS BE ABORTED. This album doesn't diverse very much until the last track; urban rapping from CHILL E B, 'A Menace to Society' just trying to justify his crimes, sad man. One for the Beavis and Buttheads out there, or an alternative to all the Punk Rock comps. flooding the market.
DM
[Alternative Tentacles, 64 Mountgrove Road, London N5 2LT, UK]

THE FUTURE SOUND OF LONDON
ISDN
[Virgin Records CDalbum]

It would be so easy to steer away from this lot. Their 'we're so fucking superior' attitude is enough to get up anyone's nose, but for all the self-right-on-ness it is impossible to listen to much of their material without being in awe. "ISDN" is quite simply their most 'complete' moment, an album which draws away from merely mix-and-matching sounds, but never lapses into complete uniformity. 'The Far Out Son of Lung...' is a mighty track - even Laswell couldn't imitate that grinding bass which holds it together - the only complaint really is that, unusually, it's far too short. For me though "ISDN"'s finest is the sister track 'Amoeba' which staggers into view by a stuttering sequence and quickly bursts through as a massive drum excursion. These two are merely highlights though, for once within 15 tracks and 75 minutes FSOL engage their banks of machinery in a complete distortion of electronic music without lapsing into over-intelligent self-indulgence.
DD
[Virgin Records - in your favourite music store around the globe]

THE GEROGERIGEGEGE
Life Documents
[Fourth Dimension 7"]

Ridiculously OTT release from Richo, with our notorious Japanese hero parading more of his prolific 'wares'. Both documents feature a sort of sub-disco backbeat from one channel and grunting, moaning and other vocal emissions' from the other. Quite listenable all in and definitely an item for the kids' parties. Nice yellow sleeve too and, of course, very limited. Now, where did I leave those balloons?
VL
[Fourth Dimension, PO Box 63, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 6YU, UK]

LISA GERRARD
The Mirror Pool
[4AD CDalbum]

Sweet jesus, just what can I say? This, being the last disc I'm reviewing this issue, makes me wonder if all this is all worth it. I mean, working in this particular creative medium and listening to Lisa Gerrard's first solo work I just have to think that for all the slaving away it will never be possible to create something as utterly perfect as the music she makes. The same also applies to her partner, Brendan Perry. "The Mirror Pool" oozes beauty, a cliche I know, but there are no other words which could possibly describe the joy, sorrow and endless feeling of the album. Her voice, much richer and deeper these days floats on a silken tide of orchestral and organic instrumentation. She utters no words, merely sounds which seem to cascade from her whole body. Tears are falling, and by the time 'Sanvean: I am your shadow' is reached I'm consumed in floods of emotion. I have no idea how she can perform this song without breaking down. In the sterility of the TEQ office there are pools on the floor! Being taken away, body and soul after all sixteen

tracks it's time to sit down, eyes closed and do nothing but think about the future, and whether there is one, because at this particular moment I cannot do anything. Drained of ideas and in awe of Lisa Gerrard's undoubted genius, this crumpled heap of a person is on the verge of locking himself away in a room with nothing but this CD and the entire DCD collection FOR EVER.
DD
[4AD, 15 Alma Road, London SW18 1AA, UK]

GOD
Appeal to Human Greed
[Big Cat Records CDmini-album]
From God's amazing "Anatomy of Addiction" album comes this 35-odd minute, 5-tracker filled with ruthless remixes. The grating 'Gold Teeth' opens in 'Charles Atlas Mix' form, underpinned with deep, deep hip-hop grooves. Laswell's 'Bloodstream' snakes its way through noise and tribal, ten minutes worth of outright invoking paranoia. 'On All Fours', gets the Godflesh bass-driven onslaught and just maybe, maybe steals the show. 'Tunnel' is a distortion nosedive, whilst the closing 'Bloodstream (Peckinpah Mix), exudes the almighty power of God with a surround of drums, feedback and other-worldly sounds way, way in the Kev Martin mix. Recommended, but then so is the full album too, so buy them both.
DD
[Big Cat Records, PO Box 3074, London W4 4ZN, UK]

GOOD COURAGE
Old, Broken & Destroyed
[Hard Records CDalbum]
Almost familiar blend of sequences and heavy percussion. The vocalist, Erich Nelson makes this sound so Depeche Mode in places, that it's nowhere near the rage-fest. I was expecting. Pleasant enough, but hardly ground-breaking as was suggested.
DD
[Hard Records, C.F. Richs VEJ 122, 2.th, 2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark]

v/a
GOTHIK
[Cleopatra 2CDalbum]
Oh no. 154 minutes, 33 tracks over two discs, filled with.., you guessed it, dreadful goth. RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY and ALIEN SEX FIEND, are the only two names I can bear to report. No, I'm sorry, that's it...
DD
[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

GOZ OF KERMEUR
Irondelles
[Rec Rec CDalbum]
Maybe I'm coming up to my 'time of the month' but some of this stuff is starting to 'get to me' & I'm finding myself with even less patience than usual... These guys are an actually quite reasonable French guitar/bass/drums trio - it's the vocals causing my forlorn disposition. They force me to think of a drunken John Cale (c. "Sabotage") crossed with N. Cave, which is not too bad for the first few pieces but ultimately starts to irritate. The music's quite reasonable too, a vaguely European take on post-No Wave skewed rock with spiky arrangements & an almost Mayo Thompsonish (c. "Soldier Talk") tone to the guitar. 'Cornet frites', 'Honeyrose' and 'New York' are all, uh, quite reasonable, but after that I commence to stare through the blinds to see if the schoolgirls are on the way home yet... And it's another CD sent out in a plastic wallet without the inlay card. What, am I supposed to be so fucking grateful to receive it I don't care that it's not a full package? Boy, did they get a wrong number!
SJ
[Rec Rec, PO Box 717, CH-8026 Zurich, Switzerland]

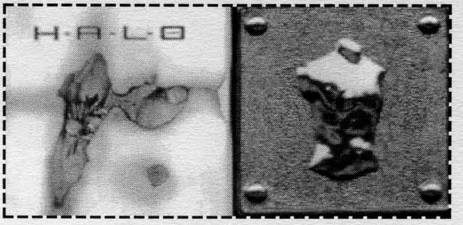
ORIOL GRAUS
La Solitud de L'Origen
[Hyades Arts CDalbum]
Oriol Graus is a Spanish composer (I won't bore you with the resume - the booklet has far too much to tell you about his 'achievements') who on this disc uses computers to produce some fairly spectacular results. 'I despres...' combines descending, organ-like chords and tones with algorhythmically generated noise. 'La consequencia' is a deep, noise-only track that bubbles along quite happily for nearly 9 minutes; it's not half as immediate as 'I despre's...' though. La Solitud de L'Origen is a good advert for the computer as a musical tool, rather than as a limiting factor. Graus' music Is essentially tonal (as the sparkling arpeggios of the lengthy title track make clear), which makes the frequent 'noise' interruptions on certain tracks so startling and unexpected. An absorbing CD, if a little too self-important in parts.
VL
[Hyades Arts, Apdo 39032, 28080 Madrid, Spain]

RANDY GREIF / DAN BURKE
Fragment 56
[Complacency CDalbum]
Decent enough post-industrial/'ambient' team-up of two leading lights of the I Know Not What Generation (Burke's the founding father of Illusion of Safety, Greif's an electro-acoustician/concrètist active since '77). Barring one track with unnecessary 'real' voice this is a reasonable though untaxing collection, ranging from more-or-less music ('Forensic Solutions to Beauty') to 'traditional' cut-up/collage swill ('The Man Who Wandered Away') to, well, post-industrial ambience... To be honest, it feels like this collaboration has blunted the edges of both artists a tad - only on the last couple of tracks does IOS's sinister edge begin to creep in - and Greif's dark tribalism isn't too much in evidence either. If, like me, you harbour a perverse impulse to make little piles of CD's then you might as well drop this on top of one. Otherwise it's completists only.
SJ
[Complacency, PO Box 1452, Palatine, IL 60078, USA]

THE HAIR & SKIN TRADING CO.
Psychedelische Musique (Lava Surf Kunst)
[Freek Records CDalbum]
This, their third album is a collection of recordings made since their inception. 'Outtakes' I hear you cry. I suppose they could be, but of all their albums this one works best, and these tracks would have surely met opposition from their previous Beggars Banquet label? No obvious Loopisms here, fourteen experiments in sound manipulation. Atmosphere abounds. Track titles are a little silly; some have none at all, others for example, '*', 'ZZZ', 'DDD' and 'MJGJGJ. DXFVAZLK, HG. AWSEL* AS' - what the fuck! Still, possible pretensions get eaten away by the percussive spluttering and raw goodness of that last one with the long 'name'! Definitely an album worth looking into from a band who seem to have more than their fare share of hateful opposition.
DD
[Freek Records, PO Box 3585, London NW3 3RH, UK]

H.A.L.O.
Immanent
[MNW Zone CDalbum]
Eclipsed
[MNW Zone CDsingle]
Just as Colin Newman's profile is at a high with his Swim label and new solo material, Bruce Gilbert gaining acclaim as DJ Beekeeper, spinning the decks at the Disobey Club, then we should step back and take a breather with Graham Lewis' new project, H.A.L.O. Only a short breather mind you as his "Immanent" album is an upfront affair, and guaranteed to get the pulse racing. With a few references to the short-lived Wir album, "The First Letter", this is a bustling pop album, constructed from layers of synthetics - not exactly techno, but furthering House rhythms so it comes pretty close. An excellent use of sampling used in conjunction with Lewis' scowling vocals has this record charging for possible chart status. A great H.A.L.O. debut. 'Eclipsed' is the first single from the album, and

brings together three mixes from the mighty LFO. The first is called the 'Emmersion Mix' (is this a joke?) which is actually rather forgettable as it takes all the meat from the track. The 'Growth Mix' is also far too unresponsive, as is the last 'Sweep Mix' which turns the track literally into a sedate loop. I take back the 'mighty' LFO tag, and once again my fear of remixes is realised. Make sure you buy the album though.
DD
[MNW Zone, Box 271, S-185 23 Vaxholm, Sweden]



HALOBLACK
Tension Filter
[Fifth Column Records CDalbum]
A smidgen of static, overdoses of vocoders, rhythmic drum pulses, horny guitars and sexy atmospheres - this could almost be Mr Reznor when he's not overly occupied in trying to be terribly weird and perverse but just getting down to create hot hardcore "pop"! Not to be content with NIN there's some very expert manic Ministry-esque guitar dropped in for good measure. Don't get me wrong no slander meant here. Haloblack produce clean hard sounds with their influences being evident but what's wrong with that.., half the musicians nowadays are trying endlessly to be someone else. "Tension Filter" epitomises the game with all credibility and class intact. A must if you get off on screaming guitar, feedback and distortion. I can just picture them now - mean, moody, big boots, tattoos and brain numbing noise - what more could you ask for?
GE
[Fifth Column Records, POB 787, Washington, DC 20044, USA]

HARMONIA MEETS ZAPPA
[Materiali Sonori CDalbum]
Not, unfortunately, the Rother/Moebius/Roedelius edition but a trio of Italian chamber noodlers who've re-made/re-modelled various Zappa compositions into (surprise!) noodling chamber music. Their half dozen or so original compositions are vaguely more interesting than the 'covers', but one can picture the CDi version with a hideous Mr Blobby-type character wobbling zanily around...Or at least I can...In real terms Materiali Sonori's syrupy easy listening releases are even less appealing than finding a crate of ECM CDs in your orgone accumulator.
SJ
[Materiali Sonori, via Trieste 35, 52027 San Giovanni Valdarno, Italy]

M.J. HARRIS & BILL LASWELL
Somnific Flux
[Subharmonic CDalbum]
I dread to think of the nightmares this may induce if it does actually get you off to sleep. Two long droning tracks, each over half an hour, filled with deeply harsh uneasy sound. The first, 'Distal Sonority' is particularly worrisome as grumbling tones wind, coiling around the throat. By the time the second, 'Capacious' is reached you're gasping for air. There's not much respite here either as percussion rattles in the vocal darkness. Horribly good! "Somnific Flux" is probably about as grim a sound-piece as you'll unpleasantly hear, so don't be fooled by the title!
DD
[Subharmonic, 180 Varick Street, New York, NY 10014, USA]

THE HATERS
Urban Sensitivity
[Commercial Failure CDalbum]
G.X. Juppiter-Larsen and the entropy boys really know what that 'pop' ethic is all about, don't they'? Here, the Haters present 4 dinky little tracks in the space of one lonely hour. Track one 'The Stuff Twitching' (21:47) and track two 'Touch Upon Inappropriateness' (9:16) are "made from grinding live mics". Hmmm. You certainly couldn't get the Haters under the Trade Descriptions Act there, because that's a pretty accurate way of describing these performances. Track three 'Accidental Similarity' (14:29) and track four 'Slipping Between Slight' (16:35) are apparently "made mostly from breaking glass". Take a guess as to what those two sound like... The label's catalogue describes this disc as "the sounds of the very processes that give life". Say that again. I'm afraid to confess that I've always found the idea of the Haters more 'fun' than the cold reality. This CD doesn't really go beyond any of the sounds you'd find on a hundred other such albums of hard electronics. For confirmed 'fans' only.
VL
[Commercial Failure, 2005 Mission Street #56, San Francisco, CA 94410-1217, USA]

HAUJOBB
Freeze Frame Reality
[Off Beat CDalbum]
Obviously heavily influenced by the Puppy school, but this German trio update the sound and also add fresh ideas and create a blend of dance and soundtrack work. "Freeze Frame Reality" has a rich synthetic feel, a totally digital domain with only vocal additives floating around the electronic tones and beats. 'Dream Aid' is a lush pulsing terrain commanding attention with its deeply hidden vocals and understated percussion. 'Consciousness' moves through ambience, trippy, seductive tones rise over dubby beats and another sedate vocal workout. 'Nezzwerk' is both frantic in its outright electro moments, but halted by mellow guitar notes, and gives a clear indication to the process of Haujobb, clearly a band who want to experiment within the confines of an electro band of today. The only comparison I can make is to Television Overdose, but even then the two are miles away from each other. I can't recommend Haujobb enough.
DD
[Off Beat, Horster Strasse 27, 45897 Gelsenkirchen-Buer, Germany]

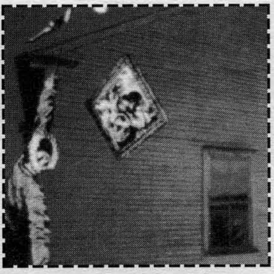
HEAD LIKE A HOLE
Flik Y'Self Off Y'Self
[Noise CDalbum]
So New Zealand have been shocked by HLAH's nudity, profanity and g-strings. and Kerrang seem to adore them. What can I say to beat that... There's some nice tribal sounds here under the obligatory thrash guitar, agonished angry vocals and I'm sure these guys are a wow live. Sort of thing you could quite easily mosh along to but nothing here to encourage you to rush out and buy the disc. Sorry chaps but even the promo photo - Sex Fiend meets NIN - has been done before and a million times better.
GE
[Noise, Kurfurstenstr. 23, 10785 Berlin, Germany]

HEAVENLY MUSIC CORPORATION
Lunar Phase
[Silent Records CDalbum]
Despite starting dreadfully with the sound of bird-song and flowing water, the first track does move forward (though the birds/water is constant throughout), with very slight percussive elements and revolving underlying electronics. Heavenly Music Corporation is Kim Cascone of PGR and though HMC has clear ambient intentions, leaves behind much of the experimental

nature of PGR. "Lunar Phase" was composed for a Japanese radio station which broadcasts 24hr ambient music. The station bases its contents on the movements of the tides, thus the use of field elements I guess becomes relevant. HMC move in similar territory to Jarre's ethereal moments on 'Seafloor Starlight', built largely upon shifting repetition, with single note changes. The best of the eight is the title track, which is surrounded by whirling machinery, and percussion which brings to mind some of Aphex' "Ambient 1" album. In all a very clearly toned and worthy listening album, if a little obvious at times.
DD
[Silent Records, 101 Townsend, Suite 206, San Francisco, CA 94107, USA]

HED
Folklaw
[Ultimate Records CDsingle]
Q. What do you get when you mix acoustic guitars, fiddles and groovy dance beats? A. 'Folklaw', another goodie from the prolific Ultimate label. 'Folklaw' is, as the name suggests, a bit folky - as in jug band folk, and on this disc it comes in three flavours along with the rather pedestrian [by comparison] 'Cybersnake'. All very danceable, and the final mix by leading light in the world music/ambient field, Banco De Gaia, is considerately de-re-constructed. Nearly half an hour of immediately hypnotic and addictive pleasure .
CB
[Ultimate, 271 Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 9LU, UK]

CHRISTOPH HEEMANN
Aftersolstice
[Barooni CDalbum]
This is only the second solo album from Heemann (ex-HNAS) but an astonishing piece of work it turns out to be. From the Ernst-like collage cover, before you even play the thing, you know this is going to be quite something (nothing like judging a book... etc, etc). Beginning with a short orchestral prologue ('Solstice'), the piece moves into the first main section, 'IV'. Electronics and subtle machine sounds ebb and flow, never outstaying their welcome; a disembodied voice repeats the word "corridor"; the piece becomes transitional. 'I' follows and is more uncontrolled (including an incredible section for 80 violins). Concrete sounds are more apparent here, although still used sparingly. 'Appendix' closes, the sound of dripping water... and something darker. "Aftersolstice" is an invigorating release, perhaps the most *enjoyable* piece of new music I've heard in some time. I hope Barooni can persuade the man to produce more work of this calibre very soon. Highly recommended.
VL
[Barooni, PO Box 12012, 3501 AA Utrecht, The Netherlands]



HELTIR
Neue Sachlichkeit
[Dark Vinyl CDalbum]
The ever-prolific Rozz Williams holds out another project, this time leaving most of the gothic well and truly at home. Instrumental loopings remind very much of Nurse's off-kilter turntable synchronisations. The man's spoken poetry is perfectly placed, especially on 'Gleichschaltung' where a saxophone drifts effortlessly, held over a snared percussion and minimal samples. This jazzy tone is furthered on the set, though in a more free-form experimental way, i.e. noisier. Heltir is definitely one of Rozz' better projects, and anyone with a liking for early C93, NWW, or Bourbonese Qualk can find something or worth within its fourteen tracks.
DD
[Dark Vinyl, Ketterlerstr. 4, 95652 Waldsassen, Germany]

HIDEG RONCS
A Vihar / The Storm
[Drone Records 7"]
Another debut vinyl release for Drone, this time of Hungary's first 'underground' experimental group, the Hideg Roncs (Hungarian for 'Cold Wreck'/'Nervous Breakdown' apparently). On this 20 minute EP, the group use only bass, tapes and voice to create a ritualistic and claustrophobic noise, full of deep rumbling sonics and unintelligible vocal overlays. The effect is of being trapped far beneath the ground, with the sound of massive, antiquated generators vibrating through yards of stone. Impressive stuff. Not forgetting the annoying lock-grooves at the end of each side too - I *like* it. On see-through red vinyl and (as usual) limited to 200 copies.
VL
[Drone Records, c/o Stefan Knappe, Loningstrasse 15, 25195 Bremen, Germany]

H.N.A.S.
Gegenstande Fallen Zu Boden
[Dom Elchklang CDalbum]
A digital reissue of what appears to be a 1988 LP from this now defunct expressionistic German duo, with two added cuts from '86 and '89 (the latter running to almost 20 minutes). There's a timeless, Krautrock spacedoutness to a lot of these songs, HNAS sounding at times like a poppier, more psychedelic Nurse With Wound although that's probably unfair as these recordings have a definite character and direction of their own: the chiming keyboards gradually replaced by uncomfortable electro-acoustics on 'Leckere Krapfen' stand out as an example. They take in soundscaping, rock, collage, electro-acoustics, concrete sounds and humour (without descending into 'wackiness') in a breathless, totally accessible fashion that's highly appealing. In fact the long track, 'Im Tal der Mohre', is a fantastic multi-sectioned composition that documents HNAS's talent for excess quite brilliantly. This is simply an essential piece of recent history. Beautiful colour collage digipak from Achim too.
VL
[NO ADDRESS LISTED. Distributed by Rough Trade Deutschland]

HOLLAND / SKIN / TUNNEL
[Con Brio CDalbum]
A blistering sore of an album. Relentless noise throws itself from the speakers. Imagine Splintered, crank up the volume, speed it up and that's 'I Want To Live In A Refrigerator'. Twenty minutes of unshifting PAIN. 'Seething Deluxe' is such an inaudible weight of sound it takes on a power electronics role, though I'm sure it's guitars causing this din - well, I'm not sure, but who cares, this fucking HURTS. Over half an hour's worth of hurt too, until they begin to feel pity and wander off... 'Cancer Vs. Clown' is the most 'musical' as feedback driven guitars career drunkenly around light metallic percussion. Light relief to end this three-track, 74 minute BRAIN-SCRAMBLER. I have absolutely no idea who or what Holland / Skin / Tunnel is/are, all I know is that this disc provided more musical guts than I've experienced from the noise genre in a long, long time, and they've done it in a non-arty way. Certainly no heads-up-their-own-arses here... Send 12 measly bucks to them NOW...
DD
[Con Brio, c/o J.M., 48 Eighth Avenue, Suite 118, New York, NY 10014, USA]

THE HOUSE OF USHER
Stars Fall Down
[Celtic Circle Productions CDalbum]
Far more interesting than label mates The Escape. Just shows you how dire that lot are doesn't it, because this is still portentious, pretentious, derivative cliche ridden piffle. The blatant Clock DVA rip-off on the opening track was the best bit.
CB
[Celtic Circle Productions, PO Box 7113, 47601 Geldern, Germany]

HUNGRY GHOST
Brownout at the Spectacle
[Galivant CDalbum]

Strictly by rote fake tribal/ambient outing from the US. The deadening mental inertia caused by being subjected to such frippery makes one even more aware of how inspired the likes of Jorge Reyes and Muslimgauze really are. For some reason Americans seem pretty clueless about 'new electronica' and I kind of wish they'd leave it alone, you know? If you have a problem with this then go cry on someone else's shoulder - I don't want to hear about it. Okay with you?

SJ

[Galivant, PO Box 170331, San Francisco, CA 94117, USA]

HUSK / DELPHIUM
Split EP
[Aquese 7"]

Mr Cuddles is at it again - with another untitled track! DELPHIUM's piece marks a change in direction, being more structured than 'usual' (first person to correctly inform me exactly where ol' Cuddles is currently 'coming from' wins a half-eaten jar of baby food), similar to a zero-fi Skylab with its combination of 'psychedelic' keyboards and muted dubby rhythm. HUSK's entry is mainly high-pitched oscillating with some very distant guitar and barely audible mumbling. Both tracks are worth hearing, but I still can't decide if the format and basic unavailability of such limited pressings makes the whole concept kind of counter-productive - I'd be curious to have some reader feedback should anyone care to respond... (Edition of 250 by the way...)

SJ

[Aquese, 13 Warren Close, Sandhurst, Camberley, Surrey, GU17 8EL, UK]

THE HYBRYDS
Soundtrack For the Aquarium
[Daft Records CDalbum]

Long overdue release finding itself a perfect home on Dirk's Daft label. The Hybryds being at the forefront of ritual music through releases on Dark Vinyl and their own 3RIOART label, found themselves commissioned to create an accompaniment to the aquarium at Antwerp Zoo. Collecting sounds from the zoo itself, the surroundings and animals they immersed themselves into creating ambient sound pieces to move with the animals themselves. Recordings of the Dolphins, Ivo and Dolly, are heard throughout, calling from within the shifting scenes The Hybryds created. As zoo's can often be such a sterile environment this was such a wonderful idea and must really enhance the visitor's view of the Antwerp aquarium. A breathtaking experience just hearing this... Maybe there's a possible video release here too?

DD

[Daft Records, Stationsstraat 116, 9120 Beveren, Belgium]

IBID
I Love Music
[Vaseline Entertainment CDsingle]

This year's fashion alternative. Ibid don't wrap their single in any old piece of card or plastic, they sew a holder onto one breast of a shirt, and whilst their logo covers the other, this disk is held in place firmly by the nipple. Managing to wrestle the CD from the shirt as I wander around the street, chest firmly thrust forward, I grab the tunes of Ibid, which basically consist of pinching other people's Top tunes; 'Philadelphia' and some other thing, (which for the life of me I can hear on the radio, but can't put a name to it), and adding bits and pieces like crowd noise and other 'extras', such as noisy guitar riffs. Definitely interesting, but wears thin after a while. But as for the shirt, it's MINE!

DD

[Vaseline Entertainment, c/o Xper Xr, 46 Ralph Court, Queensway, London W2 5HT, UK]

IL GRAN TEATRO AMARO
Hotel Brenessel
[Rec Rec CDalbum]

What I've got for review is actually a short promo from a 'forthcoming' album (with luck already deleted by the time you read this); on the strength of these six tracks I hope someone else draws the short straw when it arrives... Slightly gloomy (possibly even 'decadent' - heavens to betsy!) continental nightclub/café songs which are doubtless just dandy for those desiring to hang out in a sweaty Berlin cabaret and watch some old queen play the accordion - sorry girls, but count me out...

SJ

[Rec Rec, PO Box 717, CH-8026 Zurich, Switzerland]

ILLUSION OF SAFETY
Rules of the Game
[eM 13n 3" CDmini-album]
From Nothing to Less
[Complacency CDalbum]

"Rules..." is actually a solo mini-disc by IOS founder Dan Burke; a very fine musique concrete/sound collage recording that wouldn't be out of place on Metamkine. 18 minutes of pure sonic buggery & explosive mayhem - much more than just a useful adjunct to the IOS *oeuvre*... Worth playing at least seven times in sucession. The latter's an album of live improvisations from a US east coast tour in '93. IOS here are Burke and Thymme Jones (last heard in the rather vacuous Brise-Glace with Jim O'Rourke), and (barring a lengthy block of silence) they're in high spirits. Complacency include handy hints on their PR sheets. This one says "File under: Post-Industrial Improvisation." Can do, but I'd risk claiming this is as close to 'real' industrial music as it gets (at least from my perspective on what constitutes industrial music at this particular moment, which is all that counts anyway...). But if they really want to bandy the old 'post' business around I won't hold it against them... They've also made a big deal of saying there's no sampler/sequencing crap on this disc, and it does make a lot of difference - this type of material is by far preferable to the rhythmic/percussive brouhahha they've been indulging in. Some parts float along with an industrial hell dreaminess, others have that *de rigeur* big drill/high pitched whine combination so beloved of Scandinavian suicide freaks, others clatter, bang and scape nastily. A return to form (barring the silence) and the best of the recent batch of Complacency releases.

SJ

[eM13n, Inzlingerstr 22, D-79540 Lorrach, Germany / Complacency, PO Box 1452, Palatine, IL 60078, USA]

IMAGE TRANSMISSION
Regurgitation
[Discordia CDalbum]

One for Zoth fans most definitely. I find it hard to believe that this Dutch four-piece are big on the Techno scene, as "Regurgitation" is full of immense cyber beats and rage-core vocals. The title suggests there's nothing new here and ultimately it's spot on. Competent enough but I preferred Pouppee Fabrikk.

DD

[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

IN BE TWEEN NOISE
So Delicate and Strangely Made
[New Plastic Music CDalbum]

The conceptual baggage and arty pretentions accompanying this disc mire it from the get-go, though if you're charitablyminded and can avoid Steven Roden's booklet gobbledegook (including a page-long quote from Dubuffet whose name he misspells!) you might think a few tracks work up a suitably mournful mooing. But hardcore Art it most unfortunately is - with all the trimmings - the title being a dead give-away, perfectly encapsulating Roden's prissy self-image and tedious modus operandi - fussy, neo-minimalist puffing, blowing, scraping, tweaking and tinkling - ugh... In fact, after the first three tracks it's entirely ineffectual feeping and wheedling - 'experimental' pabulum for new age sissies. In fact, the more I think about it and the more I listen to it, the more I hate it. And, in fact, it's another CD featuring a mother-loving accordion! All the Holy Martyred Saints and Baby Jesus save me!

SJ

[New Plastic Music, PO Box 36B16, Los Angeles, CA 90036-1154, USA or via PO Box 658, Sheffield, S10 3YR, UK]

IN THE NURSERY
Scatter
[ITN Corporation CDalbum]

There's little I can add to Deadhead's praise-filled summation of this shimmering duo's career last issue, except that this compilation CD is essential too! Collecting tracks from most of their albums, and adding rare compilation tracks, remixes, tracks from 12"s, a new piece recorded with Colin Wilson narrating and even a spectacular remake of the Sabres of Paradise's 'Haunted Dancehall', this is 70 minutes of unadulterated neoclassical pleasure from start to finish. Anthemic, proud and victorious, the music of In The Nursery commands the attention like no other; and no one else can toy with the emotions like the Humberstone twins. "Scatter" is an ideal place to start if you've never heard ITN before but this compilation will easily find favour with devotees also (for pretty obvious reasons). It's worth it for 'Haunted Dancehall' alone. Warmly recommended to all.

VL

[ITN Corporation, 52 Roebuck Road, Sheffield S6 3GQ, UK]

INDICATE
Whelm
[Touch CDalbum]

I can't say I was particularly looking forward to this... Jim O'Rourke is all that is wrong with experimental music and why it could never be accepted by the masses. So wrapped up in his own self-importance and full of 'let's blind them with intellectual piffle so they can't enjoy my music' that his music does actually become secondary. If you ignore the bullshit his preposterously huge catalogue obviously contains more than a few gems, but go shove your attitude right up your own ass Mr O'Rourke. The other Indicate member is another kettle o' fish. Robert Hampson is unnasuming, he's always allowed his music to speak for itself and I regard him as something of a more than underrated genius. As Indicate the two collaborate fully and it works splendidly. Waves and drones come together giving the work an outer light rather than offering darkness as so much of this type material does. Buzz machines infiltrate in short bursts lending a full patterning effect, and touches of silent spells lower the frame from brief high noise thresholds into a swell of mind-rendering thoughtfulness. "Whelm" is three pieces which must be 'listened' to, these aren't merely background doodles. Music to make you think for a change.

DD

[Touch, 13 Osward Road, London SW17 7SS, UK]

INDUSTRIAL HEADS
The Fear and the Anguish at the End
[Furnace CDalbum]

I don't know which band is in charge of the Norwegian electrocore scene, but I would wager that Industrial Heads will have a shot at the title once this disc begins to circulate. In case you're wondering, the "industrial" in their name reflects the Zoth Ommog/Wax Trax! dance-oriented interpretation, rather than the traditional noise connotation. Although this CD isn't introducing a sound you haven't heard, they demonstrate that within the established parameters, a band can still keep pace with its contemporaries. One of the notable aspects is that the songs alternate between three vocalists, so the staleness factor doesn't set in.

R-M

[Furnace, 340 Sryant st., San Francisco, CA 94107, USA]

INFORMATIK
Direct Memory Access
[Sinless Records CDalbum]

Look out the Cyber(net) men cometh. Sinless Records releases Informatik's "Direct Memory Access"; 8 tracks, 38 minutes, no guitars. I wouldn't brag about it though guys, you know a tiny guitar note or two might just make the contrived sound a little bit more individual and anyway including a cover of Led Zep's 'Immigrant Song' on the disc isn't a very electronic move is it? OK I confess this is probably worth buying for 'I Confess' and 'Autonomous (Nothing is real mix)' which apparantly featured on a net-based compilation "Mind/Body Volume 2" and was ranked #1 song by a panel of independent judges. Hmm, so this is what people are accessing via the Internet.

CB

[Sinless Records, 496 Harrison Avenue, Suite 4, Boston, MA 02118-2408, USA]

INSIGHT 23
Obsess
[Fifth Colvmn Records CDalbum]

Walking a short distance away from the popular guitar-drenched American style, Insight 23's debut CD should have a little more luck at appealing to the Zoth Ommog crowd. 123 combines harsh, dancefloor pummeling grooves, CB-radio tinged chanting, and guitars that are used in an enhancing fashion as opposed to taking over the mix. In other words, when the chunky riffs cut into the rhythms, they don't smother the beats. If you must have a comparison, picture a cross between Steril and early Chemlab or Virus 23.

R-M

[Fifth Column Records, POB 787, Washington, DC 20044, USA]

INSTITUTE FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE
Gekippt
[Decay Records CDalbum]

A slice of the Danish hard stuff, which gyrates smoothly without exploding to an all-out noise. Sequences are allowed space to move within their own confines, and atmospheric vocals add depth to the electronic meanderings. A cover of 'Der Mussolini' weights the album, and brings to mind the spirit of The Flowerpot Men - one of the best versions of this much covered song I've ever experienced. In all a fair Industrial album, despite the band's rather silly name. Worth the pennies...

DD

[Decay Records, PO Box 179, DK-1005 Copenhagen, Denmark]

INTERMIX
Future Primitives
[Sun Music/Roadrunner CDalbum]

In time I grew to adore the first Intermix album, and still listen to it often to this day. Their second has never really left me with any great impression, so I'd always wondered where they'd go from there. "Future Primitives" is the answer, and is actually quite a good description of this album. This is a million miles away from the new Delerium (which is closer to Intermix' past!), with no outright references to Enigma. "Future Primitives" has an ethnic flavour floating throughout - sampled chants, didgeridoos, bells, etc - so much so that the electronic nature of Leeb and Fulber

almost becomes secondary. Hardly an immediate album, but it is a great 'listening' collection, and there's always something to go back to and explore. The only downside for me was some of the track titles which were so obvious; 'Telekinetic Warriors', 'Seeds Of Harmony', etc... But never mind, just air 'Lost Tribe' and its mellow synthetic, post acid funk as a single and I'll be more than happy to persuade others to check this out.
DD
[Sun Music, Suites W & T, Tech West Centre, 10 Warple Way, Acton, London W3 0UL, UK]

JAMMIN' UNIT DISCOVERS CHEMICAL DUB
[Rising High CDalbum]
Excellent new release from Rising High with Jammin' Unit's (he of Air Liquide) take on electro-dub. Entitled "Jammin' Unit Discovers Chemical Dub"... Well, it's just that. Ten pulsing tracks that deliver almost all the way. Close attention to sound and atmosphere around the grooves make this one for the home as much as the dancefloor. More Mad Professor than say.., Ice or Scorn. Know what I mean?
RM
[Rising High, 7 Westbourne Grove Mews, London W11 2RU, UK]

PHILIP JECK
Loopholes
[Touch CDalbum]
I feared the worst when I heard the tinkle of toytown bells on the opening 'Casio' and thought this was going to be a general piss-take. But no, the second 'Anatomy' added meat immediately through a looping of static charge. Philip Jeck uses old equipment rather than being a resident of the digital domain, not that you'd realise this by listening to "Loopholes". Perhaps this is why there's a scratchy aura surrounding the recordings. He utilises vinyl discs which offer an authentic outmoded (in these times) feel. Long tracks reel around the speakers as rhythms fuse the tonal repetition into easily accessible pieces of music. 'Louie's Riddle' might even be viewed from some techno chart of one sort or another, such is the 'easy' nature of Jeck's work. Definitely one for those who are a little afraid to dip their toes into experimental waters.
DD
[Touch, 13 Osward Road, London SW17 7SS, UK]

v/a
JEKURA - DEEP THE ETERNAL FOREST
[Apocalypitc Vision CDalbum]
From Apocalyptic Vision, a compilation and a nice piece on the effects of man's greed, based on destruction of the World's rain forests. Proceeds of this release going to the defence of aid rain forests, which in itself is a fucking good reason for buying. *I hope all this cardboard and paper's recyclable!* Only two outfits I've heard of, SIXTH COMM and ORDO EQUITUM SOLIS, so I'll move on. WHITE ONYX ELEPHANTS, play introduction and finale. Introduction, 'The Termite People' pan pipes and natural tropical forest sound that manages to works its way into some sort of womb experience, very comforting. The finale's an exquisite pipe and percussion piece. SOPOR AETERNUS, goth supremos, if ever I saw one, interprete Black Sabbath's 'Paranoid' and 'A National Acroba', into Celtic/medieval tunes with some amazing vocals. AADOM's is a Christbearing form, semi-electro performance, 'Wilderness of a Dali dream'. The keystone is dark orchestrated atmospheres from the likes of NLC, JACK OR JIVE, REQUIEM IN WHITE, and not a bum track in sight. Apocalyptic Vision can pat themselves on the back for producing such a gem. (p.s. Where's the Sting track!?)
DM
[Apocalyptic Vision, Ahornweg 19, D-64807 Dieburg, Germany]

JUSTER
What I See What I Think
[TVT Records CDalbum]
Lightweight rap thing which is far too funk-ladened to be of any real interest. With the hardcore Beastie's really coming of age with "License To Ill" and the "Root Down" EP then there really is no need for this sort of thing.
DD
[TVT Records, 23 East 4th Street, New York, NY 10003, USA]

MICK KARN
The Tooth Mother
[CMP Records CDalbum]
The ex-Japan bassist with a host of other 'names', such as David Torn, Jakko Jakszyk, Barbieri and Gary Barnacle, amongst the many... Filled with jazzy permutations and alternative riffs, a good album of ideas is spoilt by the lack of vocal personality. Karn himself possesses the monotonal whine, which moves lifeless over much of "The Tooth Mother". Whilst being an excellent bassist, he lacks the frontman ability, which lets this set down. We all know that Sylvian was the one man in Japan who could put his hand to all things, and maybe this confirms that there were no others within those ranks.
DD
[CMP Records, PO Box 1129, D-5166 Kreuzau, Germany]

KILL SWITCH...KLICK
Beat It To Fit, Paint It To Match
[Cleopatra CDalbum]
A Seattle five-piece following an Industrial route, though surprising with no guitars! This is a promising debut by a band who dare to utilise variations of instrumentation on their tracks. It's not until the third track, 'Follow Me' where the band really kicks (the second 'Celebrate The Misery' is just too poppy for its own good), with anthemic stylings and forceful objectives. Some tracks expose similar programming to early Thrill Kill Kult which is no bad thing - there was a band who blew it after only two albums, maybe K.S...K. can take it further? Their approach is song-oriented, with a slight punk attitude. The enclosed cover of the Pistols' 'Submission' is extremely disappointing, sounding too laid-back KMFDM (actually fans of Ech and co. will probably enjoy the whole of this). In all, an 18-tracker which sets a variety of inspired electronics to mostly good use.
DD
[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

KILLING FLOOR
[Re-constriction CDalbum]
Debut album from State side Cyber rockers. Guitars, all manner of sequences, percussion and orchestration, and pretty cod samples - "I usually get kissed before I get fucked" being a prime example, all combine to construct some very palatable trax. Nothing very new on the idea front beyond a subtle tint of danceability but these guys may fill the gap as so many of they're stable mates have now opted to make sub-standard metal as second album releases. These chaps just might do the same, time will tell. Be warned there is track 11, a live cover of Motorhead's 'Ace of Spades', this could be a warning of things to come - Suck City.
DM
[Re-Constriction, 4901-906 Morena Blvd., San Diego, CA 92117-3432, USA]

KIRLIAN CAMERA
Erinnerung
[Discordia CDalbum]

There's a languid grace to the acoustic treatments 'The 1st Corridor' and 'Sea Of Memory' and they slot alongside Angelo Bergamini's unmistakable sequenced sounds of 'Errinerung versions 1 & 2'. As do the simple piano and Emilia Lo Jacono's beckoning vocals of 'Schliebe Mir Die Augen Beide' and

'Veronika Voss (Memories Are Made Of This)', from Fassbinders film of the same name. Once again Bergamini and all who play with him have given us a kind of album which shows that soul can still shine through despite the machines. Experience the originality, versatility and insight of one of the industry's new breed of genius.
CB

KIRLIAN CAMERA
Ordo Ecceles Mortis 1985-1986
[Discordia CDalbum]

Kirlian Camera have been around rather a long time. Trying to think where I was 10 years ago... Oh yeah, one of those several years I spent drunk, Pozzy Punk ground to a halt and died... However Kirlian Camera seem to have been knocking out some very melodic rhythms, spoken lyrics with a vast array of instrumental back-up, and doing it rather well. A lot of these ideas have been done to death since, and this lot may have influenced quite a few bands we rave about these days? Young Gods spring to mind, as an upgraded version. Apparently they're still going, so what they sound like now may be more of an issue. Ten years ago they sounded ok.
DM

KIRLIAN CAMERA
Solaris The Last Corridor
[Discordia CDalbum]

Seems I get to find out what Kirlian Camera are about these days after all! "Solaris The Last Corridor" is very diverse. The opening track 'Enned' though, is worth a by-pass, the accentuated English leaves one to wonder why the female vocals hadn't been done in the native tongue. 'The Eternal' is an old Joy Division track, and bloody depressing enough. And from here things can get very Avant Garde/surreal, and at times annoying. 'Zentrova 1996' is a massive beat score crucified in places by some psychopathic bastardised Casio keyboard, which I'm glad to say is an experience not repeated. Further vocal ventures are in German, and sound more at home and at ease with themselves. In a nutshell Kirlian Camera progressed into electronic sheets of contorting metal. Comparisons for those in need are Delerium, The Anti-Group... Somewhere round there, and fucking odd.
DM

[DISCORDIA, AN LIFFERSMUHLE 95, 47877 WILLICH, GERMANY]

KODE IV
Silicon Civilisation
[KK Records CDalbum]

Been some time since I last caught Kode IV, so it was good to see they've carried on developing their highly charged synthetics. "Silicon Civilisation" is a robust softcore techno outing filled with melodic sequences and spatial tones. Hardly forging new ground but nice to see them laying back and hitting with a more intelligent approach than most. A very pleasant trip.
DD

[KK RECORDS, KRIJSBAAN 240, ZWIJNDRECHT 2070, ANTWERP, BELGIUM]

KOOLFANG
Jambient
[Fax CDalbum]

A collaboration between Namlook and David Moufang of Deep Space Networks is their cross-hybrid of jazz and ambient. 'Koolfang' commences the album, all mellow and twiddly, and you can picture cool-cats lying back listening to this in the summer haze. 'Fusonics' is much more interesting even if it does get a little spacey in moments. Forming through 25 minutes the track is far more electronic, and less reliant on guitar tones to propel it, actually featuring a light drum-track which does the job much better. 'O-Ton' is really just a rising frequency, and the closing 'Counter' follows in the vein of 'Fusonics' with its sequenced fusions and drum infection. An organ sound tends to break the flow in the middle of the track which gives it that intended jazzy leaning. I can't say I really recommend this, but as 'Fusonics' is so long, and if you can bare to sit through the first track's 19 minutes then this may well be worth getting ahold of... cheaply!
DD

[FAX: +49 69 450464]

LA 1919
Jouer. Spielen. To Play
[Materiali Sonori CDalbum]

Italian/English team-up (with Chris Cutler & Charles Hayward) results in not bad dual guitar/keyboards/drums improvised post-art rock outing. The only other LA 1919 recording I've heard is "ARS SRA" with Henry Kaiser and John Oswald - this seems like a continuation of the ideas therein, though compositions have now been ditched. There's a (luckily fairly infrequent) tendency towards the twiddlier end of the rock improv spectrum which is about as much fun as having several kittens run up your back when you bend over to scrape poop from your boot, and the keyboards can be slightly nauseating, but many sequences are excellent. Interesting to contrast the differing stylistic approaches when percussionists change - strangely, the tracks with Cutler appear 'straighter' than those with Hayward (who really should be muzzled - his singing on 'Sheffield Wednesday' is beyond diabolical)...I'd have liked to hear a tad more tension, edginess or downright brutality in evidence - there's never a feeling that these guys are really pushing themselves - but that's just me, you know?
SJ

[MATERIALI SONORI, VIA TRIESTE 35, 52027 SAN GIOVANNI VALDARNO, ITALY]

LABRADFORD
A Stable Reference
[Flying Nun CDalbum]

Excellent follow-up to 1993's "Prazision". Labradford's songs have a haunting, dreamlike quality undercut by a pervasive atmosphere of unease. With their swirling keyboard/electronics washes and sparse guitar & bass they somehow manage to sound simultaneously dense, sombre and minimal - it's probably a cliché but 'David Lynch soundtrack' frequently comes to mind. It's a real shot in the arm (some hope...) to hear an album this good - at once desolate and uplifting - and if this is the future of 'rock' then for once I'm happy to embrace it... And sorry, but I fail to see the Stereolab comparisons (apart from as a sales point...) - if Stereolab were to produce something this good they'd probably be unceremoniously dumped by whatever major label is currently pretending to like them... Anyway, one of the year's better thus far.
SJ

[FLYING NUN, 555 KINGS ROAD, LONDON, SW6 2EB, UK]

LAIBACH
In The Army Now / War
[Mute Records CDsingle]

Welcome to the theatre of war as Laibach continue on their sonic crusade with this 20 minute 4 track assault on the senses. From the opening 'In the Army Now' to the very last breath, this disc exhibits the physical power and epic sweeps of their renowned might, as glorious choral passages and powerful vocals are framed around a backdrop of symphonic drama. 'War' and its two hard hitting remixes are brutal anthems. 'War-methods of prevention mix' being the more metallic, and the outrageous ultra electronic 'War- ultraviolence meets hitman mix', an expanded soundtrack for a strikingly amorous Armageddon - a machine gun will take you to a place where you can't cry anymore. Buy or die!
CB

[MUTE RECORDS, 429 HARROW ROAD, LONDON W10 4RE, UK]

ALAN LAMB
Primal Image
[Dorobo CDalbum]

Any mentions of English cricketers can be dispensed with right now... Alan Lamb, the Australian artist introduces 'Wire Music'. A seemingly endless stream of resonating frequencies in mood phases, swinging from higher harmonics to lower pitches.

Though using totally different source materials I can only really view Thomas Koner's work as offering such a vast expansive sound with long periods of oscillating near-silence, as does Lamb's. The forty-five minutes of pitch changes is devoid of noise, just crystalline movements from the wires themselves. Recorded between 1981 and 1988 it's amazing that this was all recorded on analogue equipment, and that the passages are so clearly audible. Two 'tracks', 'Primal Image' and 'Beauty', the latter being slightly more dominant.
DD
[Dorobo, PO Box 22, Glen Waverley, Victoria 3150, Australia]

BILL LASWELL
Outer Dark
[Fax CDalbum]
This actually reminds me very much of Coil in their more esoteric moments, and is surprisingly lighter than the title would have you believe. 'Chakra' is heavily flavoured with Middle Eastern riffs and treatments. Pipes and watery tones flow in waves through the meandering desert of ambience. All strangely illuminating. "Outer Dark"'s other track, 'Ananta (Passing Dream)' has a weightier feel. A working machine pulls throughout, as though on a train ride through some of the East's more built-up areas, before halting in a looping of strings - the awakening. Once more Laswell lends more than mere ambience to a Fax release. Forty-five minutes of this man's worldly influence.
DD
[Fax: +49 69 450464]

BILL LASWELL & N.J. BULLEN
Subsonic 2 - Bass Terror
[Sub Rosa CDalbum]
Sadly not a collaboration, but a single, 15 minute track from Laswell and 37 minutes from Scorn's ex, Bullen. Laswell works his magic once again, producing an arsenic-laced propellant of loops and droning low-strung coilings. 'Bass Terror Tetragrammation' is a sculptured journey, rising and falling in parts. A voice enters, dissipates, percussion sweeps and fades. Laswell has more to say in 15 minutes, than other artists do in 2 or 3 albums. Bullen meanwhile takes the dub route. 'Nocturnal Crawl' is built from an immensely menacing ambience, with the slow beating drums offering relief against the sweltering heat being produced. 'Again And Again' moves forward, the percussion taking on pace while the humidity of the backing subsides taking on form through bell-like tones and droning piano/bass. Both of Bullen's tracks are 18 minutes a piece and affect the mind as much as Laswell's. Music of the highest calibre.
DD
[Sub Rosa, PO Box 808, CM 1000 Brussels, Belgium]

THE LEGENDARY PINK DOTS
Chemical Playschool Volumes 8 & 9
[Terminal Kaleidoscope 2CDalbum]
The first new release post Play It Again Sam, "Chemical Playschool Volumes 8 & 9" offers up 130 minutes of classic Dotsology: 19 tracks recorded in a dreamworld between 1990 and 1995 and including the 5 tracks on the free mini-CD that accompanied some copies of "The Maria Dimension". Mighty fine this affair is too. These prize delectations range from skewered songs like 'I Dream of Jeannie' or 'The Artificial Silence' to the startling overly psychedelectronic soundscapes of 'Andromeda Suite' and 'Premonition 7'. The material here is perhaps less accessible than their 'normal' string of albums; there's less of a 'pop' feeling (relatively speaking, of course) to these songs than usual. Fans will require this intruvenously, however, myself included. An extra-terrestrial aquarium of electrolytic pleasures. And it's good to see the Dots going it on their own now.
VL
[The Terminal Kaleidoscope, Postbus 38253, 6503 AG Nijmegen, The Netherlands]

LIGHTS OF EUPHORIA
Brainstorm
[Zoth Ommog CDalbum]
Machine tooled techno. OK so it is another re-affirmation of standard formula stuff but Lights of Euphoria dictate terms in considerable solid blocks of sound, made more oppressive by some well garrotted vocals - "No tears please it's a waste of good suffering" - 'No Tears', "Give me your life, give me your time, give me what you have, give me you" - 'Give Me You'. The driving hip hop rhythm of 'Reaching Out' and the pulse racing pace of 'Subjection [Violated]' are smack on but other tracks fail to lighten the greyness and at times the relentless drabness becomes irritating. That said, 'Brainstorm' is good of its kind.
CB
[Zoth Ommog, Norsk-Data-Str. 3, 61352 BAD Homburg, Germany]

LIMBO
Siliciolatria
[Discordia CDsingle]
Zos Kia Kaos
[Discordia CDalbum]
These guys should have been on the Cleopatra "Enchantments" compilation. They're right up the same street, named Retro-Electro, and as such it's quite high quality tackle, excepting the unforgivable usage of Kraftwerk riffs. Limbo do seem to find some form though with their more Numb/Delerium affairs. May grow on me a bit more with time, which at present I ain't got! "Siliciolatria" is 6 remixed tracks with a far more positive feel, pushing the BPM's a bit and taking off a good few well-needed years. 'Trance Euro Progress' is still bloody cheesy. The reworked 'Cyberchrist' from the album is a great deal better with the addition of a heavier drum pattern. All in all if the album had been to this standard it would have been rather shit-hot.
DM
[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT
Selected Scenes From The End Of The World
[Apocalyptic Vision CDalbum]
I'd been warned about this lot before... Top goths, or so the conversation went. I'd hoped I wouldn't ever have to experience them, but alas, the usually rather good Apocalyptic Vision label have picked them up. What can I really say... Nothing... I've already lived through Flesh For Lulu, etc. L.A.M. may be more musical, but the pan stick has long since run dry. Once was enough.
DD
[Apocalyptic Vision, Ahornweg 19, D-64807 Dieburg, Germany]

v/a
LORDS OF ILLUSION (SOUNDTRACK)
[Mute Records CDalbum]
My lust for Clive Barker has waned over the years with him drifting more and more into fantasy and further and further away from the hell, guts and horror of his early work. However, his latest cinematic adventure is an adaptation of the short story from Volume 6 of his Books of Blood and if this awesome soundtrack is anything to go by hit the cinema *hell raisers*. Simon Boswell's orchestrations are dark and disturbing, conjuring up dark alleyways, shadowing intriguing torment with overreaching crescendos nestling alongside sweet and touching, fragility and beauty. The bizarre inclusion of Erasure's cover of Perry Como's 'Magic Moments' is by far the most horrific - but I guess it fits the storyline! Ultimate experience courtesy of the deep, deep blues contribution of Diamanda Galas' 'Dancing In the Dark''s superbly schizophrenic piano coupled with quaking vocals, the purest demon of the night.
GE
[Mute Records, 429 Harrow Road, London W10 4RE, UK]

LOVE IS COLDER THAN DEATH
Auter
[Opcion Sonica CDalbum]

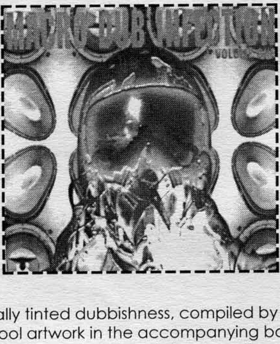
"Auter" is a compilation of compiled things I've got no clue about. No doubt past releases... Better watch what I say about the first few trax or I'll be reviewing Songs Of Praise next. How many hallelujah's can, or should be allowed... Being my first encounter with Love Is Colder Than Death, all seems very OES, and variations on such themes. All very pleasant in small doses. Too much may lead to Thora Hird on Sunday. Or even Harry Secombe... Handle with care!!
DM
[Opcion Sonica, Tamaulipas # 125-23, Col. Condensa, Mexico D.F., C.P. 06140]

PINKIE MACLURE
Favourite
[Placebo CDalbum]

It's amazed me the number of people who've found this album boring (I think 'crap' was used at one stage). Pinkie is, and always has been far from boring. She's collaborated with some of the highest alternatives in the past and this is the first time I've caught her on her own. "Favourite" is full of cabaret delights filled with the unmistakable Pinkie vocal richness. She plays around with her voice so much that the instrumentation, created with organic keyboard sounds, accordian, clarinet, bass and hearty drums is secondary, though complimenting perfectly. Their voices aren't too similar but I could liken the feel of this album with much of Danielle Dax' folky outings. Marc Almond's finest "Mother Fist" album is also referenced - that's why I'm bewildered that an Almond devotee and Dax slave could view this as rubbish. Seven tracks to take to that desert island and listen to over and over... More please Pinkie.
DD
[Placebo, 17-19 Alma Road, London SW18 1AA, UK]

v/a
MACRO DUB INFECTION
[Virgin Records 2CDalbum]

The fact that this is on Virgin and they're not trying to sell us re-issue material from way back when came as a great surprise and relief! 2 CD's and 23 tracks of some of the best in experimentally tinted dubbishness, compiled by Kev Martin, and some cool artwork in the accompanying booklet thingy. An exceptional line-up indeed, each track merits a paragraph of its own.., yep, they're as good as that! From the slightly more conventional, such as the DISCIPLES, ROOTSMAN, IRATION STEPPAS to the experimentation of TORTOISE, NEW KINGDOM, BEDOUIN ASCENT and the ever popular EDIL. SPRING HEEL JACK paves the way with his brand of refined junglelistic break beats, proving Jungle doesn't have to suck! Better mention top funksters TWO BADCARD, vocals are thin on the ground but LAIKA's'Kaika a virgin mix' (ha ha very funny NOT!) is for those in the need; and that's only disc 1. Disc 2 continues both the scope and standard from such tip top acts as 4HERO, THE GOLDEN PALOMINOS, THE MAD PROFESSOR, WAGON CHRIST, IRATION STEPPAS and 1/4 faves SCORN. TRICKY's minimalistic ambient groove, 'Pumpkin' is an essential listen and must mention class act BANDULU. "Macro Dub Infection", a must for all your dubbish needs.
DM
[Virgin Records - in your favourite music store around the globe]



MAEROR TRI
Mediamentum
[Holonom CDalbum]

A seventy minute compilation of 11 MT tracks which formerly languished on cassette, representing merely one facet of this German trio's output. "Mediamentum" features some of their more contemplative works, and is perfectly distilled dream-music. Fast becoming one of my favourite experimental groups Maeror Tri capture the moment between wakefulness and dream and reproduce it sonically, with shape-shifting, flowing electronics and processed noise. This is intelligent mood-music for the most heightened of moods. And the packaging (a two colour card wallet with full colour inlay) can't be faulted either. This is the first release from a label to keep an eye and ear on in the future. First edition of 500, so best be quick.
VL
[Holonom, Loningstrasse 15, 25195 Bremen, Germany]

MAEROR TRI
Myein
[N D CDalbum]

Can't say I've ever possessed a CD in triangular packaging.., but I can now. A fitting outer garment for this unconventional, but consistently good German band. Continually their music, or drones, work best with the eyes closed. Their work builds, gradually recognisable sounds can be heard but by that time, a hypnotic state is induced. "Myein" as the name suggests is immersive. Deeply resonating with strings and a delirious concoction of other studio sounds. Another head trip.
DD
[N D, PO Box 4144, Austin, TX 78765, USA]

MAIN
Corona
Terminus
[Beggars Banquet CDsingles]

Main are undoubtedly one of the great, original bands in the UK. Robert Hampson and Scott Dawson are constantly moving the goalposts, and are never recycling their own, or anyone elses' musical moments. "Hz" is their latest project, being a cycle of six EP's, released through June to November this year. Each EP contains, not exactly re-workings, but workings around "Hz". "Corona" is the first EP, displayed in two pieces, 'Part I' and 'Part II', naturally enough. Ever shifting pieces revolving around a surrebral membrane, a dynamic swirling landcsape. Guitar strings move, phased noise screams in bursts, but never breaking the concentration or will of the backing itself. The second EP, "Terminus", in three parts, is a more disjointed affair, angered even. Looping chains of sound open, before cutting violently to half-silence and intense ambience. The thirteen minutes of 'Part III' uncoils itself slowly entering into a machine hum, half breaking through before dying away as slowly as it came. Expect the unexpected for the next four EP's.
DD
[Beggars Banquet, 17-19 Alma Road, London SW18 1AA, UK]

ANTHONY MANNING
Islets of Pink Polypropylene
[Irdial Discs LP]

One of the strangest emanations from the new electronica I've come across. Manning's music is like a meeting between some kind of skittering organism from deep underwater and a sentient computer from Jupiter. Cascading liquescent keyboard (?) runs and something that sounds like a partially melted tape of oscillating gongs are framed by backwards synth zaps and zweeps, creating a sound unlike anything I've ever heard. It's quite quiet, reflective but totally alien music, best heard alone & late at night. Recommended.
SJ
[Irdial Discs, PO Box 424, London, SW3 5DY, UK]

ANDREAS MARTIN
Doppelpunkt Vor Ort
[Robot Records 10"]

Side one comes closer than anything I've heard recently to genuinely capturing the mood of '70s floating trance-out Krautrock. Pretty incredible. Side 2 starts with an accordion but luckily it's only a temporary aberration; the rest is as good as the first side... Clear vinyl, edition of 505, engineered by Christoph Heeman. Worth owning.
SJ
[Robot Records, PO Box 120004, San Antonio, TX 78212, USA]

MAX M
RPORATION

MAX M CORPORATION
[Hard Records & Fifth Column Records CDROM]

Danish techno artist Max M has been working on this project for two years and it shows in the quality of the finished product. Essentially this is two parts of a three part strategy, this disc being a multimedia affair and publication of the third part, a novel, is imminent. Sounding at times like an out of phase Robbie Robertson, his vocals rumbling over the sequenced treatments, Max is always in control of the machinery as he spins some elaborate cerebral structures. The ghostly, deserted strains of 'The Rookie SpaceCadet' and the 11 minute mini- symphony 'The Future' which closes the album are reason enough to purchase. This is a fiery brand of techno, a rivetting Science Fiction trip indeed. The graphic comic book included is well executed and comes in two language versions, Danish and naffly translated English. The graphics are a little on the obscured side but overall this is a first class multimedia attempt and the whole concept is appealing. Max M has that vital spark of danger and is on a mission to reconfigure the corporation.
CB
[Hard Records, C.F. Richs VEJ 122, 2.th, 2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark / Fifth Column Records, POB 787, Washington, DC 20044, USA]

MAYBE MENTAL
Lotuses On Fire
[Odd Size Records CDalbum]

Maybe Mental (bad name) are now defunct and have since metamorphosed into Life Garden (slightly better name). This disc reissues a 1987 cassette and tags on a 30 minute 'bonus track' that is pretty staggering in itself. On several of the tracks, David and Su Ling Oliphant are aided by various members of the Sun City Girls which adds an alien eccentricity all its own. Richly orchestrated electronics vie with chaotic acoustic arrangements and the combination, especially when Su Ling's vocals enter (as on 'Tone Mandalas'), can be quite superb. The bonus track 'Malaripa's Tales' is an incredibly unhinged and mutable drone-athon, with hints of just about everything yet sounding like nothing on this planet. Good stuff, and first prize to Odd Size for this (nicely digipaked) reissue - maybe now "Lotuses on Fire" will receive the attention it warrants.
VL
[Odd Size Records, 24 Rue de Laghouat, 75018 Paris, France]

MEPHISTO WALZ
Mosaique
[Discordia CDalbum]

I think this one would be more at home on Cleopatra than Discordia. To be honest I didn't get any further than the first track before giving up. Bari Bari and Johann Schuman of Christian Death and yep you've guessed it all dark and haunting - Goth. I flirted with Goth well over a decade ago but I cannot see any place for it now , so come on wake up! It's time to evolve.
GE
[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

MEPHISTO WALZ
Thalia
[Cleopatra Records CDalbum]

In 1986, Phoenix-like, Mephisto Walz rose from the ashes of the original Christian Death and whilst Mephisto Walz now features three original CD members the music of the two bands is dark, light years apart. There are no gothic heavy overtones, no theatrical dramatics and, alas, no major surprises. But Thalia shivers with cool magic and a refreshingly calming sound.

Nourishing, nurturing, with its shimmering guitars and layered keyboards it signals the resurrection of elegant goth and combined with Christianna's poignant vocals the listener embarks on a series of ethereal flights of fancy. A plush production and sure to ignite a new generation of lost souls, it will be a constant yearning, and those who love it are condemned to eternal damnation, like the vampire when the sun goes down, returning time and time again for one last taste.
CB
[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

MERZBOW
Electroknots parts 1 & 2
[Cold Spring/Dirter 7"]

Anyone familiar with 'certain' of my foibles will realise this was destined for a good review regardless of 'musical' content, but it's still another Merzbow classic. Side one starts off, uh, quietly (I use the word advisedly - compared to the average Merzbow CD it's quiet...) and ends up sounding like an insane Russian composer trying to play an ANS synthesizer in a Stalingrad whorehouse, oblivious to the battalions of tank grinding the building into dust. Side two is dense, fuzzy & bulbous with occasional shrieks, sci-fi sonorities & the sound of an exploding milk float piercing through its squiggly blubber. Essential, naturally.
SJ
[Cold Spring, 87 Gloucester Ave, Delapre, Northampton, NN4 9PT, UK / Dirter, PO Box 61, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 8GA, UK]

MISERY LOVES CO.
Kiss Your Boots
[Earache Records CDsingle]

The original, tremendous album version of 'Kiss Your Boots' is backed up here by four remixes. GTO/Technohead [2], Kiling Joke [1], and Pitch Shifter [1] really go to town on the original as shards of metal are pulverised to death under the heals of these industrial heavyweights. Each mix adding an amazing new dimension to the original and each a valid masterpiece of music in its own right, not like most of the dross churned out on remixes. If you can't get hold of this you know what to do, buy the album!!!
CB

MISERY LOVES CO.
[Earache Records CDalbum]

Move over Machine Head, Misery Loves Co. are the brand-new messiahs, they are the most metal band on the planet. Fans of Ministry, Killing Joke et al will adore the mix of metal, modern industrial and hardcore flaunted on this truly awesome debut album. MLC's solid writing team of Patrk Wiren's suitably frenzied vocals and spitfire fretwork of guitarist Orjan Ornkloo is ably supplemented by a select band of transitional musicians on various tracks. This fine Swedish metal combo are on a mission to atomise your braincells with 11 killer tracks within an uncompromising 48 minutes. The raging 'My Mind Still Speaks' and the serrated speed metal edge of 'The Only Way' will cut your full metal jackets wide open. Leaving others such as the punishing 'Kiss Your Boots' and the psycho '2 Seconds' to cauterise the wounds in their wake. You have been warned.
CB
[Earache Records , PO Box 144, Nottingham NG3 4GE, UK]

MLADA FRONTA
Illusory Time
[Tribal Production/Cannes Rock CDalbum]
Milada Fronta are a French trio and unashamadly Killing Joke copyists, in fact the album is dedicated to Jaz Coleman, with the last track even titled 'To Jaz Illusory Time'. The music is very Killing Joke kinda circa 'Outside The Gate', the lyrics are very Killing Joke, the vocals are very... er, Killing Joke (well, French sounding Killing Joke actually). Even the CD cover with its schizoid painted mask is fucking Killing Joke. Why bother with it then you may well ask? I did. So, wonder what Jaz thinks then?
CB
[Cannes Rock, 6 Chemin Du Grand Jas, 06400 Cannes,
France]

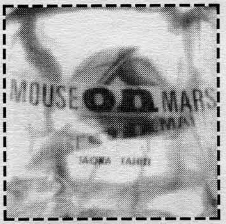
MOBY
Into The Blue / Remixes
[Mute Records CDsingles]
Mr. Diversity (or should that read Mr. Personality?), achieved the impossible with his "Everything Is Wrong" album, and created an album fixed in the dancefloor stakes which contained Techno, Rave, Ambient, Grunge and Punk. A man who just does whatever he feels. So bloody refreshing he is too. 'Into The Blue', the best track from an album which contained so many 'best track' contenders, contained the beautiful voice of Mimi Goese - a collaboration I hope Mobes' keeps using. Here, within 11 tracks over the 2 singles, the song is destroyed in various measures in usual fashion. The Beatmasters and latest flavour, Junior Vasquez move the ballad into beat-driven territory, but can't surpass the original. A case of why fuck around with a song which is 100% already. Definitely THE single of the album, but he should have filled the other 10 track slots here with other b-side material.
DD
[Mute Records, 429 Harrow Road, London W10 4RE, UK]

MOLD
Reject
[Funky Mushroom Records CDalbum]
I had been expecting Sonic Youth wannabees, but instead was shocked at the melodicism of this NY four-piece. Watery female vocals flow over competent pop/rock. Enjoyable if rather obvious.
DD
[Funky Mushroom Records, PO Box 100270, Brooklyn, NY 11210,
USA]

THE MOON LAY HIDDEN BENEATH A CLOUD
A new soldier follows the path of a new king
[Arthur's Round Table CDalbum]
Doom-laden medieval atmospheres abound from this Swiss group on what appears to be their third album. Envisage, if you will, Autopsia crossed with Miranda Sex Garden: strong, sometimes overpowering melodies coupled with serene voices. The female vocals approach a madrigal-like quality in places, complemented by a firm grusp of modern electronics and sampling. Although there are 20 tracks spread over 70 minutes here, there are no track titles to speak of (at least, not with the review copy). Fans of Coil, Current 93 and their ilk will appreciate the musics and emotions articulated on this disc. The Moon lay liidden beneath a Cloud are a group with a singular vision and a peculiar intensity of approach. Recommended.
VL
[Arthur's Round Table, PO Box 33, 9432 Walzenhausen, Switzerland]

MORTIIS
Anden Som Gjorde Oppror
[Cold Meat Industry CDalbum]
Medieval gothic instrumental thing with occasional spoken demonics and willowy backdrops. Supposedly dark and gloomy, but actually flowing over smoothly. Organic fanfares and 'from beyond' classicism flood the 40 minutes. If the death angle was removed it could even be held up with ITN, though obviously not as accomplished. Mr. Mortiis looks very fetching though, and looking as he does it's pretty hard to take it too seriously. Devillishly compelling, if a little OTT.
DD
[Cold Meat Industry, PO Box 1881, 581 17 Linkoping, Sweden]

MOUSE ON MARS
Iaora Tahiti
[Too Pure CDalbum]



The preciseness of Mouse On Mars is marked by the 'real-time' drumming provided here by Dodo Nkishi and even Wolfgang Flur, he of Kraftwerk who guests on 'Stereomission', a more than rabid opener. This is a bustling jargon-based software package of low/hi-fi sounds. Why pay near a grand for that latest sequencer software for your computer when Mouse On Mars will render your computer in a state in bliss from its internal audio CD site for about £14. But the state of the art Mouse is drawn away from the complete digital domain by the drumming as spoken previously of, and that's why "Iaora Tahiti" has the feel of a trip-hop (though it isn't), rather than all-out technology. The band also has a sense of humour, as noted on one of the album's best tracks' 'Saturday Night Worldcup Fieber' which flows from the boots of a West Ham striker's boots (I wish) - alright, Manchester United! An organically composed epic, recorded with the dilbo soundsytem - yeah right!
DD
[Too Pure, 3a Highbury Crescent, London N5 1RN, UK]

GÜNTER MÜLLER / JIM O'ROURKE
Slow Motion
[For 4 Ears CDalbum]
Whenever I'm girding my loins to weep through this week's 30th O'Rourke manifestation something like this turns up... Nerd or not, he's got a knack of involving himself in excellent projects: Tony Conrad & Faust at the South Bank was one of the best live shows I've ever seen (AMM were unbearable shit, don't believe a word to the contrary), Organum's "Aeroplane" LP is a classic... And this album is an aural whirlwind of devastating proportions. Once the 'thoughtful' bell-like guitar/percussion opening's out of the way, the duo throw up pulverising sheets of sound, solid metallic walls of Müller's drums/electronics and O'Rourke's guitar. Maybe I'm a dummy, but nothing had prepared me for this; from my end it's much 'better' than his disc with Eddie Prévost, possibly O'Rourke's best collaboration since the CD with Null. If you still haven't heard any O'Rourke why not start here? And do it now... Let's hope this inspired coupling continues.
SJ
[For 4 Ears, Steinechtweg 16, CH-4452 Itingen, Switzerland]

NACHTLUFT
C.A.E.N.
[eM 13n CDmini-album]
A 'collage acoustique', recorded live (sounds like at the back of a very large, empty hall) from this electronics & two percussionists trio featuring Günter Müller. The intention is that you re-program it at will or select random play - can't see how it would make much difference as it seems like a fairly random selection of banging and sundry noise anyway. It's okay, but doesn't develop past the 'random banging and sundry noise' level, plus the sound's so distant it renders the whole disc rather uninvolving. However, this & the IOS mini-disc are the best packaged 3" CD's I've encountered.
SJ
[eM 13n, Inzlingerstr 22, D-79540 Lorrach, Germany]

NE ZHDALI
Hey Driver Cool Down the Horses!!!
[Rec Rec CDalbum]
What's this then? It sounds like Estonian Rock In Opposition - you know, the cluttered-sounding post-prog, too-clever-for-its-own-good, mired-in-pointless-intellectualisms stuff epitomised by, say, Etron Fou Leloublan or Samla Mammas Manna... Endless, pointless tempo changes, confusing time signatures, gratuituous

use of brass (and often accordion), baffling lyrical obscurity - withering stuff, believe me... Ne Zhdali's music seems so futile and retrogressive I can't imagine how anyone could find anything positive to say about it, and the desire to produce it is less fathomable than wanting to squat in a vat of lard and pretend to be a chip.

SJ

[Rec Rec, PO Box 717, CH-8026 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND]

NEFKOM
Transit
[Dark Star CDalbum]

I can't believe there was any need to produce this CD, let alone being the task of one ex-Yello wizard, Carlos Peron. The sequenced programs on "Transmit" are so damn basic, coupled with the sparse computer-vocals, a la Kraftwerk, circa "Computer World". Seven tracks of almost banal non-human drivel. No, no, no...

DD

[NO ADDRESS LISTED. Distributed by Indigo, Germany]

NITZER EBB
Big Hit
[Mute Records CDalbum]

Much maligned for this supposed new approach, I'd have to report "Big Hit" gives them a new lease of life, especially after the extremely dull "Ebbhead". This revitalised Ebb kick with a punk attitude, reminiscent of their early days. That's what was so good about them, they had a snarl, and now with guitars and rock drums added to the electronic structure, they once again achieve that peak of 'fuck-you' power. Doug's vocals are probably stronger than ever too. I propose that just as "Showtime" was a progression from their DAF days, then "Big Hit" is a further progression into the Rock-crossover spiral. But, unlike many the spiral is upward, not downwards. KICK IT.

DD

[Mute Records, 429 Harrow Road, London W10 4RE, UK]

NOISEBOX
Monkey Ass
[Cleopatra Records & Off Beat Records CDalbum]

Gutteral Electro-Industrial from a Seattle two-piece who've been setting live audiences aflame. "Monkey Ass" is quite restrained considering their reputation, with just snatches of over-noise guitar samples. A funky offering which may not be far removed from Swamps more moveable moments. Concentrating on technology rather than harshness.

DD

[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA or Off Beat, Horster Strasse 27, 45897 Gelsenkirchen-Buer, Germany]

NON
Might!
[Mute Records CDalbum]

The man is back to form. Rolling around the noise threshold Boyd speaks about man and the elements. Often forgotten for his poetic nature the man's ongoing wisdom words are illuminated perfectly through the use of mere background sounds. The music itself is extreme, but never allowed to breach the vocal meaning of living and death. "Might!" is NON's most fulfilling album and could easily be viewed by all musical and non-musical genres.

DD

[Mute Records, 429 Harrow Road, London W10 4RE, UK]

NOVEMBER 17
Trust No One
[N17 CDalbum]

When German's poke fun at cyber-hybrids, their fingers are no doubt pointing at the style championed by N17. N17 represents everything that EBM purists hate - fast, grinding Ministry-influenced guitar work. Compared to other guitar-slinging cyber acts, N17 ranks high on the list as a quality contributor, but don't expect a balanced mix of strings and samples that you'd get from KMFDM or the Swamp Terrorists; it's closer to the sound of Misery Loves Company or Drill's early EP.

R-M

[N17, 15601 N. 19th Ave. #478, Phoenix, AZ 85023, USA]

NULL
Ultimate Material II
[Fourth Dimension/Dirter 2LP]

Mr KK spread over four sides & a return to peak form after the disappointing "Absolute Heaven" (though his 10" on 4th Dimension was also excellent). Biggest surprise is probably 'Heaven's Breath', a side of meditative/repetitive New Age-style guitar figures(!). 'Metabolic Tanz' is a slab of heavy industrial guitar/ultrasonik attack that's on a par with his finest moments, while the title track (hearkening back to his first LP from '85) sees a return to that established favourite, the 'malfunctioning dentist drill' squall. The last side features more 'conventional', slightly quieter - though none the worse for it - guitar/delay manipulations. Beautiful package too - definitely recommended.

SJ

[Fourth Dimension, PO Box 63, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 6YU, UK]

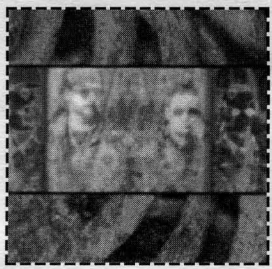
THE OBLIVION ENSEMBLE
Nightmare: SinistrotorsE
[Complacency CDalbum]

Correct me if I'm wrong (on the other hand, don't), but this must be the world's first post-industrial noise-rock opera... While we're not talking exactly Berio/Berberian, there's an excellent electronics/soprano section (both sopranos acquit themselves far better than their male counterparts), and though the early post-modern rock sections can be a bit plodding, at their best they attain a Branca-ish intensity (guitarist/vocalist Brandon Hungness is actually a current Branca associate); once all the yammering's out of the way the disc builds to a lengthy cosmic electronics blow-out. The only real debit is the mumbling/shoegazing male vocals, otherwise this is far more succesful than you (or, more to the point, I) would ever expect. Check it out, yo, as I believe they say in heavy metal circles.

SJ

[Complacency, PO Box 1452, Palatine, IL 60078, USA]

OF SKIN & SALIVA
Sahul
[Cop International CDsingle]



A promising debut by Ohio based duo Of Skin & Saliva. It's all here, crammed into 18 minutes. The down pitched death metal vocals, ritual chanting, funky bass rhythms, African jungle beats and classical keyboards running through the aptly named 'Sahul', 'The Wicker Man', 'Yggdrasil' and 'Cleansing the Spine'. The music of Of Skin & Saliva is an amalgamation of dark wave industrial and goth music. It is tribal, electro-beast dance music with an infernal core, a ferocious blast from beginning to end. Destined for great things.

CB

[COP International, Munzenburgstr. 3, 61440 Oberhursel, Germany]

ONEROID PSYCHOSIS
Stillbirth
[Decibel CDalbum]

Although darkwave is primarily a German export, Oneroid Psychosis depicts a U.S. variation on this spooky style. Haunting keyboards and other eerie augmentation are spread out like an ominous canvas with vampiric vocals splashed on top like crimson paint. Don't expect a melodic offering in the Project Pitchfork vein; these guys are closer to Vanishing Heat, but with a Rozz Williams-influenced frontman.

R-M

[Decibel, 171250 W. Bluemound rd. #122, Brookfield, WI 53008-0949, USA]

OOMPH!

Defekt
[Dynamica CDalbum]

Quite clearly surviving on a diet of steel nails this viscously twisted piece of noise making deserves some sort of recognition in these pages. For an hour a grisly collage of mental machine music, the aural equivelant of imprinting the braincells with a branding iron, is thrust on the listener. From sheet metal guitars 'Willst Du Hoffnung' to sledgehammer sonics 'Your Love Is Killing Me' , their rage remains focused. What they do, and brilliantly, is provide a catalyst for the type of conflict needed to provoke a necessarily extreme reaction, just look at the previous reviewers comments in MFTEQ! The only really black mark against this album is the cliched ending to the last track 'Defekt' whereby it 'sticks' for an annoying 10 minutes or so. Closer to death metal than they are to anything else Oomph have generated a powerful monster and Defect it is not.

CB

[Dynamica , Kurfurstenstrasse 23, 10785 Berlin, Germany]

ORCHIS

The Dancing Sun
[Cryptanthus CDalbum]

Relatively generic apocalyptic/pagan folk that draws a parallel with C93 and various other World Serpent acts. In a similar vein to Fire+Ice, some of these tracks are Orchis' own settings of traditional songs although the effect is less successful than with Ian Read's group. They're hampered somewhat by inadequate recording quality - these songs are all from four-track - and the instruments (particularly the guitars) could do with being more 'in tune' with one another in places but there's still a wealth of songwriting talent revealed on "The Dancing Sun" simply waiting for an opportunity to be honed into a more perfect realisaflon of Orchis s vision.

VL

[World Serpent Distribution, Unit 7I7, Seager Buildings, Brookmill Road, London SE8 4HL, UK]

ORDO EQUILIBRIO

Reaping The Fallen... The First Harvest
[Cold Meat Industry CDalbum]

"Reaping The Fallen..." reminded me of Swans' more contemplative moments, especially as this duo share male/female vocal duties. Mixing styles; repetitive drones, acoustics and deep ambience, Ordo Equilibrio infuse a rich weaving of dark soundtracks. Their work deals with anti-Christian beliefs and fetishistic sex giving substance to the dark tones. Those with a fondness for the 'other' side of life, or the music of Somewhere In Europe, or something far nastier then this is for you.

DD

[Cold Meat Industry, PO Box 1881, 581 17 Linkoping, Sweden]

ORDO EQUITUM SOLIS

Hecate
[Musica Maxima Magnetica CDalbum]

Well, what can I say about OES that hasn't already been said? To say they are crap would be fibbing! I'll check... Well, no-one's mentioned having sexual fantasies about the female half of the outfit, so that leaves me to say, what a bloody goddess of a woman she is, and I've had rather a lot of depraved sexual fantasies... Onto the CD in hand... Nope sorry that's not the CD. Ha! Ha!! "Hecate" is indeed of the supreme standard OES are rather reknowned for. Mystical, magical, totally enchanting.

DM

[Musica Maxima Magnetica, PO Box 2280, 50100 Firenze, Italy]

ORGANUM

Sphyx
[Aeroplane LP]
Veil of Tears
[Matchless CDalbum]

Two (mostly) welcome releases from David Jackman & co - good to see his material finally becoming available on a scale larger than double figure only Japanese 7" singles...For me "Sphyx" is by far superior - "Veil"'s two-part title piece being almost 30 minutes of rather desultory 'wandering round in a warehouse' banging, clanking & clattering that might be better confined to a 23 copy only cassette release. The three shorter pieces it frames are all excellent though & could serve as the perfect soundtrack to APOCALYPSE NOW... 'Sphyx' is one of the 'heaviest' (and best) Organum recordings I've heard. Here Jackman's assembled a 'supergroup' of Dinah Jane Rowe, Jim O'Rourke, Eddie Prévost & Christoph Heeman and the results are spectacular - three dense tracks of drones, grinding and electronics/'effects' that really serve to define the genre. Hope you haven't been dumb enough to dump your turntable...

SJ

[both via Matchless, 2 Shetlock's Cottages, Matching Tye, near Harlow, Essex CM17 0QR, UK]

OVAL

94 Diskont
[Mille Plateaux CDalbum/2LP]

One felt that "Systemich" had a bunch of interesting ideas that hadn't quite reached fruition; the concept of CD 'scratching' was relatively unusual, and while Oval approached it in such a way that it almost became 'found music' (as opposed to, say, the slightly more obvious & less 'refined' technological mayhem of los Smolders' MUSIC FOR CD-PLAYER) some indefinable element seemed mssing. Here Oval's sound is at its peak - more evolved and complex, the lines between their "CD sabotage" and what may or may not be 'real' music thoroughly blurred. Unfortunately, as they haven't returned the interview questions I sent, I can't elaborate on what constitutes "improper use of MIDI, hardware criticism and frequency politics", hence the exact details of their sound production remain a mystery. Maybe it's best that way: as it stands "94 Diskont" is a phenomenal release, one unlike any other current recording - only Mouse on Mars' more *outré* moments come close - with an immediately identifiable sound and 'conceptual' style. Highlight is the side long 'Do While' - a blend of delicate percussion & light, pulsating drones subjected to constantly shifting, subtle treatments, producing a remarkable, hypnotic piece of music. Vinyl version has an extra album of 'Do While' remixes by Jim O'Rourke, Scanner, Mouse on Mars and Cristian Vogel; best results are achieved by Scanner & Mouse on Mars - O'Rourke's claustrophobic mix sort of sputters out, while Vogel's nearly suffers a similar implosive fate. A minor qualm though - this is certainly one of my favourite albums of the year.

SJ

[Mille Plateaux - Fax: +49 69 239918]

OXYGIENE 23

Blue
[Fifth Column Records CDalbum]

The brainchild of Die Warzau's personnel Jim Marcus and Van Christie. Not having heard Die Warzau, I can only gather that this is some form of Napalm Death/Scorn type scenario, whether I'm right or not, I don't care! This album's a pretty cool affair, it does spring the Smith/Severine The Glove to mind. A vast array of instrumentation and the multitude of musical influences, make it all quite a breath of fresh air; eastern percussion, jazz, sax, trumpets and all manner of drums. The agile vocals of Jan Jansen, manage to compliment each individual track from haunting whispers to pure pop, to the more OES style material, making this whole album a rather pleasant trip round the global village of influence, and rather more palatable than a lot of the Celtic inspired material about these days. Cool stuff indeed.

DM

[Fifth Column Records, POB 787, Washington, DC 20044, USA]

PANASONIC

Vakio
[Blast First/Sahko Recordings CDalbum]

A bizzare alliance one might imagine, between Sahko and Blast First, but then think about the Disobey Club which Blast First controls and its upfront move into innovative experimentation. Innovation just about sums up Sahko, and their 'supergroup' Panasonic. Minimal drones, minimal sequences, minimal percussion, minimal frequencies (though sometimes maximum!); the ultimate minimalist hybrid. Pitch changes, mood changes,

subtle manoeuvres, their tunes roll along so effortlessly, though their affect is astonishing. Each sound is allowed time to breath, and drift into whichever phase it wishes. Perhaps the reason why there is such a depth to the whole is that these boys record all their parts live. Not being chained to studio trickery "Vakio" is organically flavoured, the touch of human hands is felt through both its noisiest and silent moments. Finland's main exports are steel and paper, very appropriate if you equate these tools with Panasonic. Quite brilliant.
DD
[Blast First, 429 Harrow Road, London W10 4RE, UK]

PARTS
Tools of Sound
[Heaven's Gate CDsingle]
What shall we call this - post-deathcore, post-industrial noise rock? As the bastard offspring of said 'genres' it's decent enough - perhaps vaguely similar to Alboth in places - but it fails to even stagger beyond its narrow confines. In a feeble effort to economise on their postage bill Heaven's Gate didn't include the inlay tray card with the review copy so we don't have their address - that'll learn 'em to be cheapskates...
SJ
[NO ADDRESS LISTED]

PENAL COLONY
Multicoloured Shades
[Zoth Ommog CDalbum]
Goaty beards, long hair, street gang poses, guttural granite vocals, remixes from FLA, Psychic TV and Leather Strip, can Penal Colony do any wrong? It seems not. Pummeling drum sequences, dark atmospherics and a stompability rating of 100%. Having not heard the original versions it's rather hard to comment on the starstudded remixes including 'Halidified' (Leather Strip), 'Third Life', 'Umbilical' (FLA) but their relevant trademarks prevail. Saying that Psychic TV's mutation being for me the remix of the album. All in all an entertaining little disc and as the chaps say themselves "Extremist (Floor Power)".
GE
[Zoth Ommog, Norsk-Data-Str. 3, 61352 BAD Homburg, Germany]

LAURENT PERNICE
Sept Autres Creatures
[Odd Size CDalbum]
If it wasn't for the fact that the Pernice name was so well known this would find itself a niche in our Rhythm / Less column. Seven tracks of pulsating ambience, which beat off into trance tones or linger, slowly evolving throbbing tonal deviance. Pernice' latest CD would find a home very nicely on New Electronica, or other trendy Brit label. There is a real original feel to this as compositions are allowed the space to develop themselves through a backing of such an influx of source sounds. Outstanding cut is the sixteen minute 'Bahamout' which is infinitely drifting through a series of slight sequenced electronic phases, trawling distant horn sections, while a workman-like machine hum flickers throughout. Tribal rhythms will match themselves against weird vocal dispersions, and electronic sounds flicker in happier tones. The album is full of twists beyond the normal ambient techno frame, and thus a totally new sound emerges from this French soloist. Listen and learn...
DD
[Odd Size Records, 24 Rue De Laghouat, 75018 Paris, France]

PHALLUS DEI
Luxuria
[Paragoric CDRom]
Sadly I don't possess a PC - I'm strictly a Mac man - so I don't have access to the Rom tracks here, which include video work, information and 'gimmiks'. Bollocks! I don't even know what this lot look like. Oh well, while I cry into my keyboard let's hear the four audio tracks... 'Circles On Circles' throbs along sedately, low percussion and sequences delve before Gitane Demone's vocals come on Diamanda-style - she's also featured on the title track in a lesser role as the track is more fully propelled by its weight of rhythm. 'Shooting Yellows' is another slow track which has more in common with the band's earlier work, complete with Gregorian chants and gloomy outlook. They save the best to last though, 'Crystal Dreams'. An immensely dark, synthetic track, with a distressingly deep, hidden vocal. Phallus Dei continue to impress with their development, and the use of Demone on their work here also adds dimension. Please don't forget us Mac users' though, we're not that small a community anymore...
DD
[Paragoric, Ketterlerstr. 4, 95652 Waldsassen, Germany]

PIG
Sinsation
[Victor Entertainment/JVC Records CDalbum]
Although Pig has been a staple in the electronic scene for quite some time, it seems that more often than not, he's been verbally stapled in his homeland. Over here in the States, however, this English anomaly has been rarely heard, much less written about so there's no personal baggage being brought into this review. Pig hails from the Foetus school of orchestrated synthcore and sinister breathy-but-guttural vocals, but rather than rocking out in the current Foetus vein, Pig has remained closer to the dancefloor. Since his inception, Pig has remained consistent in his symphonic club constructions (excluding the relatively weak "A Stroll in the Pork"). In addition, every album has always contained one gem, starting with 'Shit For Brains' off of "Poke in the Eye", 'My Sanctuary' on "Praise the Lard", 'Death Raffle 'N Roll' from "A Stroll in the Pork", 'Rope' on "The Swining", and on "Sinsation", possibly 'Hot Hole'. Although his influences bleed through like a shotgun wound beneath a white oxford, he's managed to cultivate a style that is now more Pig than anyone else.
R-M
[VICTOR/JVC - in your favourite music store around the globe]

PINO & WILDJAMIN
The MS-Series
[Fax CDalbum]
Created in a studio full of Korg synths this is a wonderful album of updated Kraut-rock. Mixing trance and ambience "The MS-Series" evokes a powerfully committed scenic beauty. Plunging sequences glisten and ride the breeze, and softly whispered percussion feather these five pieces throughout the wide spaces of the mind. Minimal, Nineties' Tangerine Dream.
DD
[Fax: +49 69 450464]

PLASTIC VENUS
Helven Park
[Swim CDalbum]
Reckon this must be some of that new wave of new wave type stuff the weekly press keep trying to palm off on us, the general public. Still, it's very out-on-some-limb compared to the rest of that genre, if indeed it falls into said bracket, being slightly down tempo. Very basic bass/guitar/vocal/drums, all a touch too college kid Indie for my liking, but I've heard a damn sight worse, by bands proclaimed to be good.
DM
[Swim, PO Box 3459, London SW19 6ES, UK]

v/a
PRAGER KODEX: SONGS OF THE BROTHERHOOD
[Discordia CDalbum]

The three brothers in question being HUSSITE, SPLENDOUR SOLIS, KARL ROSSMANN and AUTOPSIA. I may be an ignorant fuckhead but to my reckoning that make four, must be some kind of rib-tickling Germanic pun. Ha ha. "Prager Kodex" is where gothic music should have been all those years ago. Music for the modern day plague. Hump the dead in the dust cart. Dark stuff indeed. Heavy on the toms and horns, brooding synths, and an atmosphere to shit yourself to and not notice. There isn't much between the outfits, they sound almost identical, though Karl Rossman is very different with his piano piece in silent movie style. Still very down tempo, Keaton would be in some deep shit to this tune, that's for sure. Autopsia's arrangement of the same piece is just more organ orientated, compared to the sinister 'Work Up to The Sky'. A good apt opportunity to delve into the music of the dark brotherhood.

DM

[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95,
47877 Willich, Germany]

PRAM
Sargasso Sea
[Too Pure CDalbum]

I don't know why but I can picture someone's living room decked out in red leather furniture, yellow and white stripey wallpaper and full of sixties kitsch ornaments. Meanwhile a bloke dressed in floral patterned shirt is lying nonchalantly sipping a pina colada listening to his stereogram where a vinyl version of Pram's "Sargasso Sea" is spinning effortlessly. All I can hear is a bloody organ sound and Rosie's vocals which should be sweet, but to my ears sound rather off-key. Far too garish. This is the Nineties people. Wake up.

DD

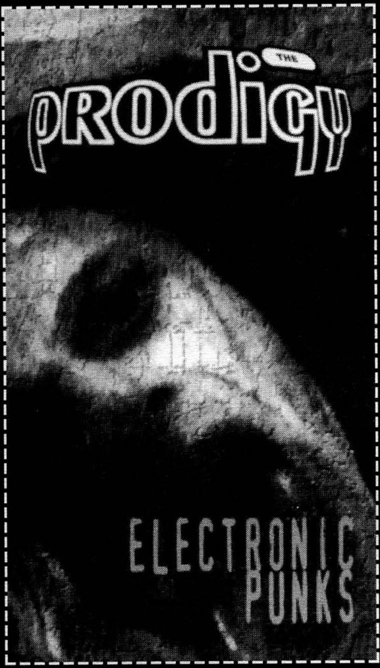
[Too Pure, 3a Highbury Crescent, London N5 1RN, UK]

PRESIDENT'S BREAKFAST
Doo Process
[Disc Lexia CDalbum]

Jesus, these guys are sooo pleased with themselves: their smugness is so vivid, so positively *three-dimensional* you can almost reach out and throttle it. Anyway, President's Breakfast are a Bay Area muso aggregate dedicated to fusing funk, reggae and 'weirdness'. This they do - so successfully that I'd rather star in a remake of MARATHON MAN's 'dental hygience dilemma' sequence than experience it again - such self-congratulatory circle jerks reduces me to rabid, frothing ire. If you want to hear this kind of stuff done properly then check out The Grassy Knoll (also from San Francisco) on Nettwork. (Cecil Taylor sideman completists might care to note the presence of ace tenorist Glenn Spearman; people who read press notes might care to ignore the comparisons to Material.)

SJ

[Disc Lexia, 1707 33rd Ave, San Francisco, CA 94122, USA]



THE PRODIGY
Electronic Punks
[XL Recordings VIDEO]

Top geezers these. If Portion Control were the electro-punks of the Eighties, then these are sure the electronic punks of the Nineties. I hated them at first. With a vengeance. Their big hit, the stupid cartooney plink-plonk of 'Charly' epitomised Essex music culture, i.e. fucking rave. From that moment I switched off, retreating to other worlds. Empty Quarter worlds (where I'd always been, but now further inside), and more or less anywhere away from ridiculous rave - Smart E's or some such nonsense springs to mind... Arghhh... But then the word began to spread about these four, or rather the one... one Liam Howlett, 'a cool electronic kid'. The Prodigy? No, there were four of them, all with silly clown costumes, floppy hair and dumb hats. Can't be. I switched off again... 1993. Front 242 new single. 'Religion' remixes by The Prodigy. No way man. 'Bass Under Siege', jesus, blinding. 'Trance U Down', psychotic, blinding... BOOM. It hit home, these were far far better than anything the Belgian's had put together for an age. Just maybe the word on the street was right? The Prodigy was in reality one bloke. Liam Howlett was its musical monster. The other three were dancers, including a rapper (more on him later...). But, still I slept... 1994. MTV... Black and white video, shot with an air of the underground. Dancers yes, but minimal crowds. A bleak cavern. A bloke takes a hammer to a wall. Vampiric overtones. Subversive dance. The tune? 1994's best, 'No Good (Start The Dance)'. I couldn't get enough. The TV, on hearing the initial subtle sequence of the song would explode, it's volume cranked to beyond capacity. Sheer reverb cracking it's technological breakthrough substance, i.e. plastic casing. Dazed, confused, I'd arrived. They'd arrived... The Prodigy... KA-BOOM. "Music For The Gilted Generation" had to be consumed. Slaughtering percussive onslaughts, festering sequences. Pissing over drum and bass, jibing at jungle. And techno? Way, way out there mate... 'Voodoo People', 'Poison'. Caustic. Savage. Chart music, yes. Pop music, NO. And this was their second album. John Carpenter's "They Live" now in vision. IT (The Prodigy) had been around me all the time. Billboards littering the area with information. Shops racked to the ceiling. Remember this is Essex. Raveland. M25 within spitting distance. I'd been asleep. Awake now, I'm PISSED. How could I do it? Usually priding myself on being musically open-minded. First to try new things. Listening to people's shit when no-one, NO-ONE will touch it. And here I've been ignoring one of the most important electro acts in circuit-board history. All because I hated the one track and image. Could it really have been so bad? "The Prodigy Experience", the first album, purchased in Ilford's only 'music' store, Our Price (puke), they've racks of them. A knowing sneer from the cashier - a wave of paranoia hits; bet he's Liams cousin or something, 'you only just buying that', I can hear him thinking, 'where the fuck you been?'. Bastard. Put it under wraps quick and get back to the relative safety of my own digital domain. It's in. No messin'. 'Prog' button, track six. No plinky-plonky. What a fool. The 'Drum And Bass Version' ramming my nose hard into the floor. Deserving all, now becoming the ultimate punter. The rest of "Experience" leaving me in no doubt of The Prodigy's production finesse. 'Charly', the single, was obviously a scam. It got them noticed. It worked for the masses, but I wonder how many others like me had chosen to remain asleep? Be aware, The Prodigy are a commercial entity, but their sound isn't typical. Far from it. That's why so many people want to work with them, from The Orb to Pop Will Eat Itself, the queue at Liam's remixing door reaches from his Earthbound Studio right around the orbital. Respect. Respect their serious confrontational tactics, and you just have to respect their funny side, mostly in the form of prankster Keith Flint. Hardly

just a dancer (a masochist would be more truthful) he litters "Electronic Punks" (the video which I'm actually supposed to be reviewing) with humour. Home-grown (quite apt) footage of him acting the fool, up snow-lifts, on Vic(!), in suitcases - yes in suitcases, spliced throughout promo vids, live stuff and more... On stage they shift up into another gear, and are one of the few electronic acts who bother to put on a show. Intimidation of the audience, intimidation of each other, Keith getting bottled and their 'rapper' Maxim Reality... The only MC who doesn't rap, but screams abuse and commands to the audience. The aggro element to fully appreciate their strong 'in yer face' prosthetics. And the aggro doesn't stop there. The video for 'Poison', another by Walter Stern - a name to look out for - is streaked with atmosphere. Seeping through the walls and floor, a dimly lit performance is loaded with menace Maxim and Leeroy's stares set the tone. Keith's beaten shitless (he loves it, *really*!), stabbed with the mike-stand and puss oozes from just about every orifice. PRIME-TIME! These kids have balls... The "Punks" video trawls through their whole catalogue, only the dour 'Charly' and a brief dalliance with computer graphics for 'One Love' are downing moments. Watch them evolve from a good-time rave act to a raw, no-holds (sound and visuals) performance band. Stadium electro. U2 on speed. OK, I'm disgraced, but surely it's better to arrive now than never at all? The voices... Stop fucking pointing... Laughing... What better way to spend an English summer - humidity, pollution, lack of oxygen, etc. - than lying in a pool of sweat in front of the box watching these lads turn up the heat.
DD
[XL Recordings, 17-19 Alma Road, London SW18 1AA, UK]

PROPHECY
The Vision
[Ultimate Records CDsingle]

Not one for getting down and strutting my funky stuff, this one leaves me cold. Typical one line dance tune with a cock rock guitar riff not sounding a million miles from old TOTP's themes. Standard rap breakdown, remixes by Senser, and has that over all sound to it. More suitable for review on 'Live and Kicking' than MFTEQ. So in such fashion, crap - can of beans.
DM
[Ultimate, 271 Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 9LU, UK]

PSYCHPOMPS
Six Six Six Nights in Hell
[Zoth Ommog CDalbum]

"We all have something of the beast inside us, we can either suppress it or encourage it". Psychpomp's Beast metamorphs before you in a variant concoction of samples, vocoded vocals, thrashing possessed guitars, obligatory deep, menacing and sluggish percussion and the odd bit of metal bashing. Basically all things good for the death manics around - prime cut being 'Superpsycho' - very Ministry but superbly executed. But at the end of the day letting their Revco devotion run away with them rather than creating new sounds.
GE
[Zoth Ommog, Norsk-Data-Str. 3, 61352 BAD Homburg, Germany]

QUINN
[Shiro Records CDalbum]

More eclectic grooves, east meets west, somewhere over the Gaza Strip, with the Catford Choral Society and a bunch of seriously lost Peruvian pan pipers, seeking new pop tunes for that essential Christmas album thrown in for good measure. Maybe not quite, o.k., but it's all on this easy listening CD. Soulful funk and more eastern chant based trax are pleasing to the ear, which can't be said of the choral lyrical ramblings about if we all lived in a perfect world, how jolly everything would be. Yet it's not all that bad. One for those into all those tranquil car ads.
DM
[NO ADDRESS LISTED. Distributed by Pinnacle Records]

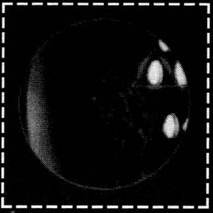
RED SECTOR A
Mechanical Resonance
[Minus Habens Records CDalbum]

Hitting out from a commercial dance background comes Red Sector A, another one-man and his technology from Italy. "Mechanical Resonance" is a relaxing experience, full of shifting soft sequences from moody perspectives. Very Eastern flavoured, at times a small similarity between his as Sakamoto's soundtracks could be heard shimmering. Highlights were the silken percussive 'E.S.P. Voyage' and the flared ambience of 'No Engine'. One to chill with.
DD
[Minus Habens Records, via Giustino Forunato 8/N, 70125 Bari, Italy]

RED SNAPPER
Swank
[Warp Records CDsingle]

Stoned late night, or easy going summer day music to file alongside the likes of Portishead, etc. Heavy jazz inspired cinematic Forties style grooves collide on a hip-hop would-be Mo Wax tip. Labelmates Sabres of Paradise wade in with a superior remix with 'Hot Flush'. Maybe if Sade got mixed in with DJ Skull this could be the offspring!
RM
[Warp Records, Studio 2, 1 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 4GF, UK]

DAVID REEVES
In Starless Space
Otras 2
[Fax CDalbums]



David Reeves is a Canadian artist whose work sits well on Fax. His debut for the label, "Otras 2" is a hypnotic journey through the voids. Low rhythmic sequences jostle for position, as near silent percussion minimally scatters the whole. 'Under The Radar' is suitably significant for its seemingly random pulses throughout a forceful, yet serene exterior. On "In Starless Space" he carries a similar vein, but on some tracks the percussion is buried deeper still, relying on frequent tones to fully oscillate creating a large mass of sound. Standing out is 'NGC 1961' where an archaic sequenced bassline burbles, slowly uncoiling and taking over the wave-like frequency. Its use of sampled speech also enhances. 'Free-Cyanatic' also works extremely well, as the percussion is almost allowed to break free, only for dislocated synth rumblings to fully guide the scene. An artist to watch for future output.
DD
[Fax: +49 69 450464]

REQUIEM IN WHITE
Of The Want Infinite
[Apocalyptic Vision CDalbum]

According to the hilarious German press-release "the impossible is succeeded" (sic). And again: "this is not a festival of heavenly voices... these are hellish voices." Well, tell us something we couldn't have guessed, guys. These recordings are apparently a cross between Christian Death and Diamanda Galas - if that's something to be proud of, then I'm off to join the circus. Just thank the stars you ve been spared this one, Stefan... Oh yeah, almost forgot: this goth-baby also includes "the most successful dance-hit of all US clubs: 'Acanthus'." Just what the world needed this summer: classical death rock you can *boogy* to. Unlistenable nonsense on stilts.
VL
[Apocalyptic Vision, Ahornweg 19, D-64807 Dieburg, Germany]

REVENGE OF NEPHTHYS
Crying Time
[Talitha CDalbum]

With a name like Revenge Of Nephthys this outfit obviously don't believe in shrouding their musical intentions in a cloak of impenetrable mystery, but then what self respecting goth act

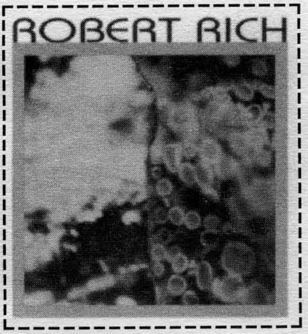
did? They do however believe in travelling the dark theatrical passages of time and sometimes occasion their music with with a humming, haughty grandeur in the vein of Hussey and Eldrich. But then what self respecting goth act doesn't? Bolstered by a light electronic pulse the stark edginess intrudes in a slightly sinister manner, you could do worse than ride the dark wave with revenge.
CB

[Talitha, Norsk-Data-Str. 3, 61352 BAD Homburg, Germany]

THE REVOLTIONARY ARMY OF THE INFANT JESUS
The Gift of Tears / Mirror
[Apocalyptic Vision 2CDalbum]

A reissue of two 'classic' releases from over a decade ago. Treading as openly spiritual a path as more recent Current 93, this Liverpool bunch actually sound quite similar in places to David Tibet's successful pop combo. There's a certain folky link between them (especially with C93's "Earth Covers Earth"), but the two can be quite different groups as evidenced by RAIJ's concentration on the voice as a musical instrument (as with the canonical voices of 'Come Holy Spirit') or the industrial drum track, floating voices and sax of 'Hymn to Dionysus'. "The Gift of Tears" from 1984 is possibly the better album of the two and its rich acoustic sonorities belie its age, but both discs are deserving of your attention. This is a very worthwhile reissue from Apocalyptic Vision, my only complaint being the utter lack of any biographical info at all; surely a missed opportunity.
VL

[Apocalyptic Vision, Ahornweg 19, D-64807 Dieburg, Germany]



ROBERT RICH
Night Sky Replies
[Amplexus CDmini-album]

I take it back about the IOS & Nachtluft packages - this is positively the best produced/designed 3" CD I've yet encountered: oversized fold-out textured card cover, colour artwork, numbered edition of 1000, etc etc. The man himself appears to be an inveterate synth-abusing quasi-New Agist - he's staged all-night Sleep Concerts for sleeping audiences (okay, for once I'm speechless...), his label's called Soundscape Productions & he's performed in caves, planetaria, cathedrals, art galleries and so on... For all that, the music here is (surprisingly?) good, reminiscent of Jorge Reyes - ethnic wind instruments, clattering clay pot-style percussion, dense swathes of electronic drones. Excellent stuff & worth searching out - but Christ, what if I'm coming over all New Agey...?
SJ

[Amplexus, Via Francheshi 1, 31029 Vittorio V.TO (TV), Italy]

ROSETTA STONE
The Tyranny of Inaction
[Cleopatra Records CDalbum]

My word, new material from Cleopatra the kings of the re-release and none other than Rosetta Stone who have been knocking about since I can't recall when (and still sound the same!). Should really change their name to Retro Stone. No doubt a biggy in Germany but for the rest of civilisation I feel it's about time Goth should be buried, its been dead long enough.
GE

[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

SUSO SAIZ
Un Hombre Oscuro
[Hyades Arts CDalbum]

My only previous encounters with Saiz are as collaborator with Jorge Reyes, and on the strength of "Un Hombre Oscuro" it's easy to see how they came to work together. "Hombre" is an immaculately segued selection of live material recorded between 1990-1994, with Saiz on guitars, loops, radios, 'atmo and ambients'; and a damn near perfect example of non-keyboard (post-)'ambient' whatever... The pieces are mostly drifting, hallucinatory washes of sound, sometimes with identifiable guitar, on two occasions with some nicely intoned 'poetry'. The guitar has a couple of moments of mildly traumatic echoplexy ickiness, but it's the washes of cloudlike drones that dominate the proceedings, sometimes hovering threateningly, sometimes, uh, floating dreamily (God, did I really say that? Must be time for my medication...). A recent favourite.
SJ

[Hyades Arts, Apdo 39032, 28080 Madrid, Spain]

SCANNER
Mass Observation
[New Electronica CDsingle]

The recent highly publicised Bjork sampling scam highlighted the crooked two-faced nature of the record industry. On the one hand is Bjork's label who felt hard done by when Robin 'Scanner' turned down the initial measly sum of compensation offered after the label's initial pressing, and no doubt raking in of the $$$ from a few hundred thousand copies of the album. Offering tales of other household names being satisfied with piddling little amounts as some kind of defence. Then of course on the other hand, we've now seen Robin and New Electronica revelling in all the exposure in pages where they wouldn't have normally received, and oh what a surprise they go and re-release the track which caused all the fuss, plus accept a slightly higher compensation fee anyway. Should've released this but continued to screw the vice and get some real dough! It was interesting to read how the trade papers perceived the episode. In their usual criminal one-sided way they reported as though New Electronica were out of order for daring not to take the money and stay quiet. Yeah, CD's are cheap too, eh? It goes without saying that there's no way this disc would have passed you by due to the above, so there's not much point in reviewing it really! If I were you I'd tackle the minimal Detroit 'Claude Young Scan' and dislocated 'Flaneur Electronique' from this four-tracker, or check out the original 12" b-side.
DD

[New Electronica, Shepperton International Studios, Studios Road,
Shepperton, Middlesex TW17 0QD, UK]

DANIEL SCHELL & KARO
If Windows They Have
[Made to Measure CDalbum]

A typical Made to Measure album (this being volume 13 in their New Music series: "atmospheric to abstract, postcard to postmodern"). Very soundtrack-like in atmosphere, this release uses clarinet, keyboards, cello, violin, bass, short waves(!) and delicate percussion to create whole worlds of wonder in the space of 9 tracks in 43 minutes. There's something very European about "If Windows They Have", the whirling melodies and the overall texture of these instrumental compositions. An air of celebration permeates the proceedings, especially on tracks like the playful 'Remi Face Au Lacis Dore' and the intricate title track. Then there's the 14 minute plus 'Tapi la Nuit (Kammerquintet)' which builds into a pulsing, indescribable whole, replete with strange melody lines and catchy hooks. All I can say is that this album is stimulating instrumental music, exquisitely played and realised. A winner.
VL

[Made To Measure, 43 Rue General Patton, 1050 Brussels, Belgium]

S.E.T.I.
Knowledge
[Hyperium CDalbum]

I described Andrew Lagowski - maestro behind S.E.T.I. - in MFTEQ11 as being 'the master engineer of 90's (and beyond) music', when reviewing this very title on vinyl, and I stand by that summation. As S.E.T.I. he goes way past all the supposed leaders in the field of spatial exploratory disks and listening freaks, and actually outputs musical form in ways not touched upon since the halcyon days of experimental music. I don't merely mean Andrew is retreading ground either, he's pushing forward, navigating areas never explored with such precision. It's interesting to see this reviewed in such publications as ID, where the writer merely states, 'for space cadets only'. The major press may be including experimental works in their pages, but they sure as hell don't understand it, thereby ignoring how important and essential work like this (and I can't for the life of me think of another as good as "Knowledge").

DD

[Hyperium, PO Box 910127, 90259 Nurnberg, Germany]

THE SHADOW RING
Put the Music in its Coffin
[Siltbreeze LP]

Another alien & alienated transmission from deepest Folkestone, and the best so far. Mssrs Harris & Lambkin (pictured on the back looking like someone's just turned off HI-DE-HI halfway through their favourite episode) have possibly produced the definitive modern outsider album - a lo-fi, distorted (in every sense) nightmare with a dark, miasmic atmosphere. Basic instrumentation is guitar(s), percussion and 'vocals', but trying to adequately describe the results is similar to stating Borbetomagus is 'a couple of saxophones and a guitar'... Not that this is 'noise', but in its own way it's as far removed from conventional music as the Borbeto trio. And sure, one might conceivably draw a line connecting The Shadow Ring to various home-made weirdo milestones of the last three decades, but that's merely a distraction - The Shadow Ring have such a clearly defined and instantly recognisable sound that idle comparisons do them a disservice (and besides, it's too much effort to think what these 'classics' might be...). Fans of bleak, neuroleptic-fuelled 'folk-rock' should not be without it...

SJ

[Siltbreeze, PO Box 15757, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA]

DAVID SHEA
i
[The Catalogue/Sub Rosa CDalbum]

Shea's fourth album is a collection of sampler-only compositions, mostly designed to be played in real-time and created to show the 'capabilities' of the sampler as a performer's instrument, rather than as a studio toy. The soundtrack to a dance piece, 'Film', opens: orchestral textures, rhythms, melodic interludes. It *does* work; much more so than any other sampler based pieces I've heard, mostly because the rhythms hold it together so well. Both 'Tex' and 'Screwy Squirrel' (under 2 minutes each) are playful fillers: tributes to Tex Avery and his 'nuttiest' creation that utilise sound effects/dialogue from the cartoons themselves, and both pretty much as you'd expect. 'Trio II' doesn't seem to be for three *anythings* and is similar in outlook to 'Film'. The disc's major piece, 'Alpha', is based on and features numerous samples from Godard's 1965 film Alphaville. Sub Rosa think it could be "the first absolute masterpiece ever written for and with the sampler". Well, it's good but it's hardly that. Shea seems to like the tag of 'music as film-substitute'. His compositions are clever (especially 'Alpha') and in many ways humorous and/or dramatic but this *doesn't* mean they're anything other than 'music', much as David Shea would apparently wish otherwise. For all that, "i" is still a good (electronic) album and demonstrates that the sampler can be an extremely versatile live instrument if given half the chance (and an intelligent performer, of course!).

VL

[Sub Rosa, PO Box 808, 1000 Brussels, Belgium]

SHEEP ON DRUGS
Suck EP
[The Drug Squad CDsingle]

The dynamic duo are back, fresh from major label re-hab. Now forming their own label to beat the system and fill the world with sleaze. Maybe I'd been expecting them to re-live their high-speed early moments now they'd been unleashed from confinement, but I was a tad, only a tad disappointed mind you, by these five little ditties. Under sedation the sick twins dangle the prize right in front of your nose, whilst grabbing back at the last possible moment. 'Come Fly With Me' and 'Coma' revel in the grime of the past, but sound far trashier. "Suck" is ultimately cheap and nasty, as are the Druggies, but I'd like to see some of that raw energy brought back...

DD

[The Drug Squad, PO Box 337, 84 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 3DE, UK]

SHIFT
A Folding Sieve
[N D CDsingle]

A few N D followers will be somewhat surprised to see this on the label. Gorgeously atmospheric music, totally spacious with waves of female vocals moving through the mellow of single noted piano, noisy guitars and rushes of electronics. Reminiscent of His Name Is Alive without the humour. I'd have to say my favourite N D release.

DD

[N D, PO Box 4144, Austin, TX 78765, USA]

SHIHAD
Killjoy
[Noise CDalbum]

I don't know who to blame really for this endless supply of so called grunge/industrial bands who are just a poor man's HM outfit. There's nothing more irritating than being confronted by an obviously talented guitarist who is content to play the game and come across with the formula. This is unimaginative and lacking in originality which is a shame cos the press release notes say that they're into Star Trek - the next generation I bet and not the real thing!

GE

[Noise, Kurfurstenstr. 23, 10785 Berlin, Germany]

SHINJUKU THIEF
The Witch Hunter
[Dorobo CDalbum]

This is actually my first hearing of Shinjuku Thief, not having been privileged to view either "The Witch Hammer" or its predecessor, "The Scribbler". Immediately I'm overwhelmed by its filmic quality. The opening 'Prelude...' is such a visual piece. Strongly repetitive through its strings, but varying detail with sampled voices and scratchy radio tuning. I had no idea of the orchestral qualities of Darrin Verhagen's work. 'A Black Furrow' follows, a beautiful air of violin and acoustics, nearing finality with a massive funereal march towards its completion. 'Cobwebs And Vinegar' de-tunes the scene but still retains the fluid air of the previous track. 'Shadow Path' darkens, more of a background distraction than before. This is how "The Witch Hunter" continues, either dropping away or reaching above to fully grab attention. 'Blue Fame' is a gorgeously simple piece, a wistful violin is stretched through an underlying ambience, before the frenzied attack of horns in 'Smoke And Ice'. If only most classical music could mean as much as this. I think this guy should be shipped off to LA, and show Mr Revell a thing or two.

DD

[Dorobo, PO Box 22, Glen Waverley, Victoria 3150, Australia]

SIDI BOU SAID

Bodies

[Ultimate Records CDalbum]

Sidi Bou Said are three girls (Claire Lemmon guitar & vocals, Gayl Harrison bass, Melanie Woods drums and vocals) from South London with passionate opinions and support of both the environment and women's issues. They also have an incredible talent for imaginative songwriting. "Bodies" is a 12 track second outing for them and it is a highly accomplished affair. Showcasing, as it does for 48 minutes, their own self styled brand of ironic wistfulness and some superb tunes delivered with a British identity rich in colour and texture. Tasteful without ever being polite and probably nowhere near their creative height yet it is hard to see how several of these tracks could be bettered by anyone. Especially 'Hyde'; "Everything is blurred visions, Floor boards soar up to welcome me" and 'Slitty Gap'; "In my coffin box invisible, Black wood to keep me in, Deep as you like, bury me, Make a big pit and fill it in". Big city sophistication sullied by a ruralness of British folk thread through each song, binding them tightly and perfectly. The album is testament to the production skills of Tim Smith (of The Cardiacs) and is another excellent release from the label that spawned last years splendid "Stacked Up" by Senser. England's cultivated answer to Hole and their ilk.

CB

[Ultimate, 271 Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 9LU, UK]

SINGLE GUN THEORY

Flow, River Of My Soul

[Nettwerk CDalbum]

Single Gun Theory return here with 12 tracks intended to seal global success. The album mixes mellow jazzy hooks and an array of samples from around the world, including street musicians from Turkey, India and the far east. The samples are used extensively and are incorporated subtly throughout. An album of enigmatically dreamy music, all elegantly balanced by the bands' expert self-production. Jacqui Hunt's celestial vocals ride the luxurious grooves as far as they will go, while tracks such as 'Decimated' and 'Thetan' show that Single Gun Theory are now taking a different, more mature and satisfying route altogether. "Flow, River Of My Soul" caters to the rhythm divine to exquisite effect and could be a classic of its type.

CB

[Nettwerk, Box 330, 1755 Robson St., Vancouver, BC, V6G 3B7, Canada]

SLEEPING DOGS WAKE

Under the Stars

[Hyperium CDalbum]

This is poppy enough to be commercial but at the same time serious enough to be credible. A sort of Dead Can Dance meet Ghostdance. Ethereal and moody, drifting angelic vocals which often run off with a dance beat. Lots of whirly atmospherics and metallic percussion merge with almost operatic female vocals - a superb mixture of sweet and sour. Imagine lots of dark velvet, decadent night clubs and mystic overtones and you're there. Haunting and exciting. Worth checking out if you're into misty landscapes and spooky ghostly figures not to mention the superb token DAF track 'Spiderbelly' - military beat to stomp along too and dreamlike vocals.

GE

[Hyperium, PO Box 910127, 90259 Nurnberg, Germany]

SMP

Stalemate

[Re-Constriction CDalbum]

The scratching on this is great. "Stalemate" doesn't follow the rigid Industrial pattern of so much guitar/electro material from the U.S. Hardly a cyber beat to be heard, just significant sequences which enhance the cracking 'live' rhythms and phaser guitars. Lyrically SMP also find favour. Distorted yes, but not in formulaic 'horror' style, they rap in a 'song' fashion, with well matched samples. Not the all-out thrash I had feared, but a carefully blended alternative electro collusion, slightly reminding of past TKK in places.

DD

[Re-Constriction, 4901-906 Morena Blvd., San Diego, CA 92117-3432, USA]

SOL INVICTUS

In The Rain

[Tursa CDalbum]

Tony Wakeford writes rather sublime melodies. Tony Wakeford engages talented musician friends to play on his albums (here including a string trio). Tony Wakeford's music is quite wonderful, in fact. Unfortunately, Tony Wakeford *always* sings on Sol Invictus albums. Can you spot the problem? "In The Rain" is the most musically accomplished of all the Sol Invictus material I've heard. Songs like the insistent 'Believe Me' or 'An English Garden', with its hidden horror, could easily become favourites of mine, if only the voice wasn't so distracting. That said, however, it is at least bearable - perhaps it's an 'acquired taste' - and "In The Rain" is a good album, full of strong songs, and with some quite fetching paintings in the booklet. Sol Invictus devotees will enjoy this immensely.

VL

[Tursa, BM Sol, London WC1N 3XX, UK]

SOLDNERGEIST

Spur 2

[Art Konkret CDalbum]

Deeply subtle and overtly rhythmic is Soldnergeist's version of the tried and tested power electronics theme, and quite refreshing this album is too. Underground subsonic rumblings, buried voices, noise-loops, only the occasional high-frequency sound to challenge the neurons: a heady and often hypnotic mix that this outfit carry off in fine fashion. This is the kind of music you can *feel* as well as hear. Soldnergeist prove that you can make genuinely powerful, affecting music without resorting to the easy option of excess volume and 'extreme' subject matter. "Spur 2" is a welcome addition to any collection of heavy electronics and Soldnergeist, therefore, a name to watch out for.

VL

[Art Konkret, c/o M. Kropfreiter, Linkenheimerweg 5, 76649 Bruchsal, Germany]

SOLPHAX

Globaline

[Fax CDalbum]

Victor Sol is a constant Fax companion and Atom Heart collaborator, +N being one of his and Atom's triumphs. On "Globaline" he puts his hobby of buying rare electronic equipment to good use, coming up with an arsenal of minimalistic sequences and simple percussive tracks. Repetitive tones flow through changeable rhythm patterns, evoking light and dark at Sol's whim. 'Hemispherical Sink' in its eight minutes of constantly shifting patterns and up/down tempo is the pick of this album filled with so many good tracks. He even adds a few rhythmless tracks which act as a waiting area for those drums weavings to re-emerge. Hearing this album I begin to see that +N is not only Atom Heart in action, I'd guess Victor has equally a large input too.

DD

[Fax: +49 69 450464]

SOMETHING ELSE

Start Moving Earbuds

[Bruce's Fingers/Discus CDalbum]

I think I'm starting to experience creeping definition paranoia... Is this free jazz? Improvised music? Improvised jazz? Maybe the latter, as it's a tenor/bass/drums trio, it's definitely 'music' and it unquestionably contains 'jazz' 'ingredients' (including, hell, a couple of 'compositions')... I'm sure you'd relish it as much as I do to just sit here all day, amiably discussing it over the Pimms and cucumber sandwiches, but I've got other forms of self-abuse on my mind... (Oh, by the way, I think I reviewed this in RESONANCE, where I stated it was a little short of genius or something; much as I hate to repeat myself I'll happily stand by that assertion. Tenor sax, bass, drums: rarely has this

combination sounded more inspired in recent times. Alles ist clar?)
SJ
[Bruce's Fingers 24 Chauntry Road, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 8BE, UK / Discus, PO Box 658, Sheffield, S10 3YR, UK]

SOMEWHERE IN EUROPE
The Iron Trees Are In Full Bloom
[These Silences CDalbum]
Somewhere In Europe are in the habit of making music that teeters on the knife edge between beauty and banality (which, if intentional, is surely the dadaist act par excellence...). Stylistically, much of "The Iron Trees" exhibits a self-conscious awkwardness which may be entirely calculated. Tracks like 'Black Lodge (2)' and 'Return to Zero' pulse with an odd, nervous energy. 'Shadows and Flesh' and 'Beyond the Horizon' could almost be songs but for that off-kilter twist rendered somewhere down the line. As on most of their previous releases, Doug P is in evidence here, and never more obviously than on 'Gods of Strife' which could easily be Death In June remixed by SIE. A dysfunctional ride through David and Andrea's captivatingly gauche 'idea' of music. Scatter their ashes indeed.
VL
[These Silences, BM Senior, London WC1N 3XX, UK]

SPAHN RANCH
The Coiled One
[Cleopatra Records CDalbum]
Whatever your perception of Spahn Ranch is, please erase it from your memory. Quality is not the factor that's been reconstructed on this new CD, but rather their style. Among the Ranch's previous trademarks were vocals that sounded like they were sung through a vacuum and club-friendly programming that seemed inspired by a carwreck with its chaotic din. This time around, however, the melothic vocals are untainted by effects and the sequencing is a bit cleaner. One element that is the same is their strict adherence to electronic composition. While this CD is somewhat different from their past, it's definitely a future worth investing in.
R-M
[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

THE SPITTERS
Give
[Funky Mushroom Records CDalbum]
Grimy, swamp-rock from ex-Missing Foundation main-man Mark Ashwill and three other spitters. No matter how much power the likes of Ministry put into their rock hybrid it just can't match the rabid nature of the real thing. The Spitters on "Give" chew the bones with a low-down vocal growl and guitar/drum abuse sensorium. Toured with CopShootCop for those who need an arrow-pointed direction. '20 Min. Into Cancer' is excellent, but then so is most of this album.
DD
[Funky Mushroom Records, PO Box 100270, Brooklyn, NY 11210, USA]

SPRING HEEL JACK
Lee Perry 1-4
[Rough Trade 12"]
Spring Heel Jack
[Rough Trade CDalbum]
The 12" is an excursion into dub/jungle/post-techno territory... Parts 1 and 4 are rendered unbearable by an endlessly repeated (naturally), hideous vocal sample - presumably from a Lee Perry record... 4 also outstays its welcome by several minutes. The other parts (2, almost 'straight' dub, and 3, a decent Moving Shadow-style slice of jungle psych) are just dandy though. The album's more interesting. Relatively laid back spacey neo-psychedelic post-jungle grooves with keyboards, effects & generally good samples, it immediately impresses with a quite distinctive ambiance. 'Lee Perry 1' makes an unwelcome reappearance, and a couple of sections nod off in the direction of lounge muzak, but as a whole it's pretty successful within its parameters. Overall it could do with a bit more bite but at its best it almost approaches Mouse on Mars territory, no small recommendation in these parts.
SJ
[Rough Trade, 66 Golbourne Road, London W10 5PS, UK]

STARS OF THE LID
Music For Nitrous Oxide
[Sedimental CDalbum]
The PR bumpf blabs about comparisons to Spacefag 3, Main, EAR, Labradford, Organum and so on. This approach (its nadir being Hollywood's 'it's not *what* your movie's like, it's what *movie* your movie's like') can often choke on its own ectoplasm, having assumed we're *all* morons and *need* to be coshed senseless by some fuckwit's antecedents, and - my fragile ego notwithstanding - assuming that someone actually *gives* a shit anyway. (Like, picture the euphoria at a CMJ Corporate Independent Music Symposium as the world's arbiters of taste score points by boasting of discovering 'this great new band that sounds like Organum'...) Anyway, I guess there probably are elements of most heavy monotony proponents at work here (Fripp & Eno's collaborations also come to mind), and I *am* a big fan of droning sounds, monotony and boredom, but the first half of this disc (it's 76 minutes long) is pretty lacklustre. The last four tracks raise the ante considerably and are sterling examples of lo-fi non-keyboard tuneless dirges. But then, so is Dual's "Influx" cassette, and it only costs two quid...
SJ
[Sedimental, PO Box 4144, Austin, TX 78765, USA]

v/a
STEP TO ANOTHER WORLD MUSIC
[Rec Rec CDalbum]
Rec Rec's catalogue spans the sublime to the ridiculous; here's an ideal way to sample their wares on a 75 minute budget price CD with a thick, glossy booklet. BOB OSTERTAG, FRED FRITH, TENKO, NEGATIVLAND, THE EX/TOM CORA, MASSACRE, plus a whole bunch of others, some related to that Rock in Opposition sound/vibe I find such a dubious proposition... There's no denying Rec Rec's got an adventurous catalogue, it's just that some of it's guaranteed to induce toxic shock syndrome. Worth considering: attempting to deal with the work of an artist who's been active for 20+ years based on a two minute snippet is as meaningful as trying to seduce a greenfly...
SJ
[Rec Rec, PO Box 717, CH-8026 Zurich, Switzerland]

STOA
Porta V111
[Hyperium CDalbum]
Based on Maurice Maeterlinck's fairy tale 'Ariane Et Barbe-Bleu', the same tale which inspired Bartoks 'Herzog Blaubarts Burg'. This 37 minute masterpiece has to be experienced, its pliant structure allowing columns of orchestral sound to build and decay around aching operatic vocals. Immense, striding, sumptuous string arrangements envelope tranquil, intricate quieter passages and combining in beauty they create a suite which is both mesmerising and inspiring. Ever majestic and imbued with emotional tempest similar to much of In The Nursery's work. In fact there are many similarities between the two, Stoa even feature snatches of militaristic drumming. For once the cliche "hauntingly beautiful" seems wholly appropriate since "Porta V111"'s angelic pathos trembles on every note. Embrace the passion of the music.
CB
[Hyperium, PO Box 910127, 90259 Nurnberg, Germany]

SUBLIMINAL KONTAKT
Voices of Constructivists
[Tone Deaf Records CDalbum]
"The beginning of Philadelphia's Electronic Body Music experience", it says on the press release. Listen to some early MBM, mix in KMFDM (including the graphics) and yep, that's the

birth of PA, USA. This is quite a moveable little bugger, with a vocalist who fills most of the sequenced spaces. A reasonable debut, largely due to the lack of bombardment, with concentration on words rather than slam-bang.
DD
[Tone Deaf Records, PO Box 1736, Philadelphia, PA 19105-1736, USA]

SUFI
Life's Rising
[Virgin Records CDalbum]
A dreary cover does nothing but add to the dreariness of this CD. If this is an attempt to cover the ground opened up by the dubbiness of quality acts such as Tricky, Massive Attack, etc.., then I'm afraid it doesn't work. The ex A.R. Kane songwriter tries to instil a touch of ambience to the soft pop washes, but in all truth lengthening these tracks just prolongs the boredom. Tricky... TRICKY... Give me Tricky. Island Records you have it sussed. Virgin stick to Kev Martin and Paul Schutze and stop trying to steal a market which others have created so perfectly.
DD
[Virgin Records - in your favourite music store around the globe]

SUN GOD
[Primary CDalbum]
From Rodney Orpheus of Cassandra Complex a new project and a pretty good one at that. Joined by Pitchfork vocalist Patricia Nigiani and Marcus Giltjes who drums with Pink Turns Blue, Sun God has nothing in common with their own main jobs. This is tribal music, infectious drumming, fused to further ethnic sounds and the differing vocals of Orpheus and Nigiani. Nigiani adds light and depth gracefully soaring whilst the dark growling of Orpheus calls these gods and goddesses onto an earthly plain. Created from spiritual knowledge rather than pure technology.
DD
[Primary, PO Box 3213, London SW2 3QQ, UK]

SWAMP TERRORISTS
Dive-Right Jab (The Remixes)
[Sub/Mission CDmini-album]
I usually think remixes are for the avid collector and that no matter how good they are they do tend to bore somewhat. Swamp Terrorists obviously think otherwise and shatter my theory by releasing three awesome remixes of rap/metal 'Dive-Right Jab', and two other kicking little ditties - 'Frozen Edge' and 'Bad Cell'. Swamp Terrorists can be over-indulgent and throw too much into one song, but on this recording they've left the tracks raw which works wonders. The second song 'Frozen Edge' is a thumping mess of techno/industrial noise which steals a few ideas from The Young Gods and shows us all where Cubanate stole their ideas from... 'Bad Cell' on the other hand is a crawling dirge of song that grabs you by the balls and doesn't let go. Deep crackling vocals and pounding rhythms form the foundations for living in the swamp - it's such a shame that there aren't many bands who've got the guts to sink to this level of depravity... A must for lovers of aggression and aggravation!
SS
[Sub/Mission, Via Turati 22/28, I-50136 Firenze, Italy]

SWANS RELATED PROJECT: M. GIRA
Drainland
[Young God Records & Sub Rosa CDalbum]
It's well over a decade now since Swans unleashed their venom on an unsuspecting world, but this is the first solo release proper from Gira himself, (assisted by Jarboe and Ministry's Bill Rieflin). "Drainland", not surprisingly, is an intensely personal journey into one man's angst-filled universe. Ten invasive songs that range from the beautifully sad opener, 'You See Through Me', wherein Gira sings the title repeatedly over Death in June-like melody and a tape of a relationship in the throes of breakdown, to the horrific lyrics and slow pounding of 'I See Them All Lined Up', to the cynical and egomaniacal 'Fan Letter'. The acoustic guitars and keyboards work well against Gira's deep vocals and the noise elements that make their irksome presence felt. An emotionally heavy (although musically affecting) experience, this is a long-awaited disc that doesn't disappoint at all. The final track 'Blind' is peculiarly upbeat despite its message: "I was younger once, and I created a lie/And though my body was strong, I was self-deluded, confident and blind". Impressively convincing.
VL
[Young God Records, PO Box 1966, London NW10 6EN, UK / Sub Rosa, PO Box 808, 1000 Brussels, Belgium]

SWANS RELATED PROJECT: JARBOE
Sacrificial Cake
[Young God Records CDalbum]
Hearing this album's opening cut, 'Lavender Girl' one could be lulled into believing this was an attempt to move into the area created by the Harris/Bates "Murder Ballads" project. Spiraling ambiance set against forceful poetics. And in fact, much of this album does move in the same drifting manner. Jarboe's voice can be matched in many ways with Bates, as a back-of-the-mind anger begins to break through the swaying tones. A definite progression from her Skin albums of some time ago, with her lyrics becoming even more intense and personal.
DD
[Young God Records, PO Box 1966, London NW10 6EN, UK]

SYNTHETIC ZOO
Hatehousemusic
[Sub/Mission CDsingle]
Hotchpotch
[Sub/Mission CDalbum]
I do get the impression that the guys from Synthetic Zoo have escaped from a zoo that has padded cells. This collection of songs is totally comic with mad samples, punk guitars and cheesy intro's, but sounds like a wash of sewage on first listen. There are some good points however, like when they try to sound like The Cardiacs, but unfortunately there are a lot of bad points - when they just sound BAD. I must tell you that if you can bear listening to this until the last track (or just skip all the others), then you're in for a treat. They've hired somebody who sounds like an extremely pissed Billy Connolly to perform an acoustic version of the Pistols' classic 'Anarchy In The UK', and it's bloody hilarious! I don't know about anyone else, but I wouldn't pay over a tenner for one song, but if I was blackmailed I might just stretch the three quid or so for the CD single, which also contains the track. Synthetic Zoo - only for the insane, or the rich.
SS
[Sub/Mission, Via Turati 22/28, I-50136 Firenze, Italy]

T.A.C.
La Nouvelle Art Du Deuil
[Discordia CDalbum]
For years T.A.C. have been producing what is now called Ambient music, and they've constantly been one of the better players in the market. This is easily their most accessible work, featuring vocals on many of the tracks. Still the experimental ambience is prominent behind, but the tuneful elements of piano and acoustic instruments move this into an area dominated by the likes of O.E.S., even the apocalyptic folk of Death In June, Sol, etc. No doubt this will appeal immensely to the gothic crowd, I prefer to delve deeper and notice what's lying buried beneath tracks such as 'Hugging Shadows', and there are huge tonal frequencies at work.
DD
[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

v/a
TASTE THIS 3
[Discordia CDalbum]
A compilation of 18 acts, 14 labels and varying styles of the odd, and fucked up. So, here's a real reader-friendly guide... The Good - ALLERSEELEN, AND CHRIST WEPT, LIMBO, WHITE LEGION, TELEVISION OVERDOSE, DRACUL and IMAGE

TRANSMISSION. The Not-so-bad - NEUROACTIVE, UPSLAND, ACTUS, RAISON D'ETRE and ILDFROST. The Tragic - ADVANCED ARTS, ENDLESS... TEQ's SOLAR ENEMY shine like a super-nova as you'd expect, and all of you have bought "The Rape Of Europa" anyway, haven't you? All in all pretty impressive, seeing as 95% of these compilations are awful.
DM
[Discordia, An Liffersmuhle 95, 47877 Willich, Germany]

TECHNO ANIMAL
Re-Entry
[Virgin Records CDalbum]
The beast unleashed! Two slabs of sonic graffiti in an audio banquet of the highest order. Messrs. JK Broadrick (Godflesh, Ice, Final) and Kevin Martin (God, Ice, EAR) bring us this towering monolith, Techno Animal's second (and far superior) album "Re-Entry". "Re-Entry" sees a work of pure experimentation cross the barriers of techno and dub. Heralded by certain individuals in the mainstream as "the best album since Tricky's "Maxinquaye"", it really is a golden swarming album of magnificence! Featuring established players such as Jon Hassell, alongside Bedouin Ascent's K. Biswas, this is the one powerful release of trance induced atmospherics. "Re-Entry" is the watershed where Voice Of Eye meet a bastardised 303 subdued Public Enemy. Low on beats, high on content. Recommended without reservations.
RM
[Virgin Records - in your favourite music store around the globe]

TERMINAL POWER COMPANY
Cyclops
[Stayfree CDalbum]
Way overdue follow-up to "Red Skin Eclipse". The duo having left Beggars Banquet once again rehone and refine their arsenal. The opening 'Locust (Of Reality)' and 'Soft White Underside' are closely forged from past material but with a new, far nastier edge. 'Nowhere' and 'Snakecharmer' fully explore the vocal talent of Roome, who's allowed to dig deep into his psyche and expel varying vocal styles. Musically these tracks cut across the electro-rock arena, with the familiar keyboards taking on a much deeper dimension. Even the guitars are allowed to rebel against an all-out thrash effect. 'Choke' is a track which drags Joke kicking into the next millenium, those lyrics oozing from the horrific pores of Roome's twisted spliffed mind (have you HEARD Witchman?). 'Survive' breaks the mould again, almost being straight metal, though far too intelligently put together. The fucked-up rhyming 'Into Two' could possibly be a single to attract the psycho's out there, whilst the sprawling, 'Freakshow' plays around with hip-hop beats and psyched guitar phases. Fittingly "Cyclops" ends with the dubby 'What You See (Is What You Get)' with that phrase stated over and over. And that just about sums up TPC... No pretensions. Just Aspel and Roome continuing to expand upon their 'Cyberslam' theme. A band in a category all of their own.
DD
[Stayfree, PO Box 419, Leicester, LE1 3ZZ, UK]

TESENDALO
Entwurf
[Drone Records 7"]
The two parts of 'Entwurf' are further examples of that droning, slightly murky ambience which Drone are now famous for. Tesendalo's entry in the label's 200-only singles series arrives on white vinyl in a hand painted sleeve (because these things are important, you know). Utilising electronics, guitars, effects and nature recordings, Peter Schuster brews up a heady cocktail of space-borne planetscapes that are, for me anyway, all the more enjoyable on this format (i.e. spread over two sides of a vinyl single). Hard to believe that Tesendalo have been around for nearly a decade though. I suspect it'd be worth looking for a copy of their 1992 LP on Marginal Talent too.
VL
[Drone Records, c/o Stefan Knappe, Loningstrasse 15, 25195 Bremen, Germany]

THEATRUM CHEMICUM

THEATRUM CHEMICUM
Verso La Luce
[Musica Maxima Magnetica CDalbum]
Been looking forward to this one. For me Theatrum Chemicum provided the most original moment on last issue's "Magnetic Submission" sampler, and their own blend of classicism and technology really is quite unique. Perhaps this really could be the sound of the new avant-garde? "Verso La Luce" is nothing but beautiful, the use of oboe just makes the pieces fly, and combined with the classical knowledge which both men possess drives the work beyond mere classification. Perhaps only Zone have come close to this, but whereas the Welsh duo branch away into other mediums, this Italian pairing are fully focussed. Poetry without words. Enchanting...
DD
[Musica Maxima Magnetica, PO Box 2280, 50100 Firenze, Italy]

v/a
THERE IS NO TIME
[Ras Dva Records 4CDalbum]
If you recognize the address as the U.S. chapter of the Leaether Strip fan club, then you probably have already heard about this impressive compilation. Although double CD's are costly endeavours, Ras Dva proves that a quadruple CD set can be sold in the same price range. That's right, four discs containing loads of growling synth-abusers for about half price. Both sides of the sea are represented, with such European notables as X MARKS THE PEDWALK, LEAETHER STRIP, KLINIK, DIVE, BLOK 57, GODHEADS, WUMPSCUT, and U.S. microchip militias' like MENTALLO & THE FIXER, OUT OUT, SPAHN RANCH, ALIEN FAKTOR and HATE DEPT. Keep in your mind there's nearly sixty bands included! You know the style, you have the address, and you love the line-up. I think you know what to do now... Go get a stamp!!
R-M
[Ras Dva Records, PO Box 92575, Milwaukee, WI 53202-0575, USA]

ASMUS TIETCHENS
Das Fest ist zu Ende. Aus.
[Barooni CDalbum]
A bizarre release, even by the standards of Mr Tietchens. It seems that between 1962-72 (from the age of 15), Asmus kept an audio 'diary', wherein he recorded his daily thoughts. That's what the press release says anyway. Out of these recordings, he has constructed a 44 minute track, processing the tapes and presumably adding further sounds. The experience of "Das Fest..." is like hearing the soundtrack of someone's hypnotic regression. Barooni's press sheet calls Asmus Tietchens a sound pioneer, and I can think of no better expression for this man's considerable talent. Voices very nearly emerge from the thick soup that makes up this soundscape - are they even voices'? Perhaps not. The CD itself is packaged in a solid matt-black printed case with a sixteen page booklet containing photographs of all the 'participants' and nothing else. A personal outing into the memories of a unique man. Unusual and unexpectedly compelling.
VL
[Barooni, PO Box 12012, 3501 AA Utrecht, The Netherlands]

ASMUS TIETCHENS / VIDNA OBMANA
Syrenia 2
[Syrenia CDalbum]
"Syrenia 2" is an intriguing collaboration that showcases each man's music 'untouched' at either end of the disc, with the meat in the sandwich being three pieces by Obmana processed and messed around in fine fashion by Tietchens. The

latter opens with his 'Hydrophonie 13a', which is a classic, self-contained Tietchens track, watery concrete sounds and electronic processing, a delicate, crystalline structure with a darker core. Vidna Obmana's closing piece is unlike his more recent material (there's no percussion here) and harkens back to his 'post-industrial' period, more shadowy swampland than the dry, arid textures of his desert recordings. The three middle pieces are almost like listening to the music from behind a perspex screen, so distant and alienating is the processing effect. It's most effective, though, and all these recordings have a sublime soundtrack feel to them, music for films of nature's secrets unfolding, yet slowed down rather than speeded up. And it's possible that each of the pieces was altered using the same processes as there's a remarkable continuity of texture here. A fine album - probably not representative material by either artist, but then that's hardly the point.
VL
[Syrenia, PO Box 2280, 50100 Firenze, Italy]

TIMESHARD
Zero (Ouroboros)
[Planet Dog CDsingle]

Scouse space cadets, heading in the direction of the Goa techno scene. A 138bpm, 'Photon (wave)' moves well, keeping one attentive, and no doubt has all the funksters in Raveland bopping the night away. 'Photon (particle)' has a tendency to get stuck in a rut and could do with a bit more knob twiddling. 'Zero', a more chilled out affair, 114bpm, large style 303 bassline, sampled rants, mid-drift breakdown with some System 7 guitar work giving the track some class. 'X Ray Ears', 151bpm, more in line with the first track, with plenty going on and I'm a sucker for 303's and this has plenty. Worth checking out, and eyes and ears kept out for these guys future releases. They've got what it takes.
DM
[Planet Dog, 271 Royal College Street, Camden Town, London NW1 9LU, UK]

TO LIVE AND SHAVE IN L.A.
[Fifth Column Records CDalbum]

If you thought Fifth Column was all cyber beats and technology overload then you'd better check this out. A fucking freak of a release. This shit-heap of dementia was created by Tom Smith who's claim to fame was starting out life in the town of Athens, Georgia; REM country (no real link there, just thought I'd throw the info. in). Out of sync vocals, masses of em, track after track, overlaid to beyond distortion grappling with a slew of feedback and sonic screeches rolled into an indistinguishable noise. Yes, NOISE, with a capital N.O.I.S.E. There's more paranoia going down here than in Trent's entire frontal lobe. Subtitled "Vedder, Vedder, Bedwetter! Loved it!! Cyber kids meanwhile, stay clear, this will fuck you up...
DD
[Fifth Column Records, POB 787, Washington, DC 20044, USA]

v/a
TO STEP OUTSIDE AND KEEP WALKING
[Freedom in a Vacuum/Swinging Axe CDalbum]

Fine compilation of electro-acoustic/music concrète/'post-industrial' whatnot and a decent sampling of each artist: four, with around 18 minutes each. RANDY GRIEF's piece (he of the five CD, six hour 'version' of ALICE IN WONDERLAND...) drones, pulsates and cloinks along darkly. In spite of having studied with Braxton and David Rosenboom, ART SIMON conjures up images of the bedroom with drum machine and fuzz guitar outbursts, though his pieces are still effective. CONTACT WITH A CURVE (from Manchester - probably one guy in his bedroom) provide some pretty wild '70s influenced spaced out electronics with a strong 'transmission from outer space' feel I always seem to find appealing - 'The Absurdity of Consciousness' is probably my favourite piece here. JOCELYN ROBERT combines electro-acoustic/concrète turmoil with 'real' instruments - the combination of 'soothing' piano and squawk/rumble on 'Hinterland Partie 1' is pretty successful. On 'Partie 3' it isn't. Unless you're a novice you're unlikely to encounter anything particularly startling on this disc, but it does have a consistency often lacking in multi-artist compilations. I'd probably recommend it on principle, certainly as an introduction to Contact with a Curve. (And if you disagree please keep it to yourself. Thanks.)
SJ
[Freedom In A Vacuum, PO Box 862 Stn. F, Toronto, M4Y 2N7, Canada / Swinging Axe, PO Box 280355, Northridge, CA 91328, USA]

ED TOMNEY
Safe (Soundtrack)
[Mute Records CDalbum]

"Safe" is the rather disturbing tale of the effects and torment of a woman who becomes allergic to the 20th Century. Not due to be released until next year, Ed Tomney's instrumentations predict an unsettling experience ahead. Atmospherics concocted by his 15 piece ensemble The Industrial Orchestra constructed from layers upon layers of sound, lead you through the corridors of blissful cacophonies and tragic acoustic ambience. Riddled throughout with a kinda resigned sadness leaving you searching for the Prozac.
GE
[Mute Records, 429 Harrow Road, London W10 4RE, UK]

TORN CURTAIN
[Ventricle CDalbum]

I assume this is a Mauve Sideshow 'side project' or something, as Dusty (Lee) is the 'instrumentalist' and it's on their label... Sheila's distant, alternately squeaky and whispering, vocals sound like a stoned castrato wandering down a long dark tunnel full of child molesters while Dusty's mellotron, effects and feedback pipe and swish dischordantly, seemingly oblivious to her plight. Amazing how 37 minutes can seem like an eternity of agony.
SJ
[Ventricle, PO Box 19523, Seattle, WA 98109, USA]

DAVID TORN
Tripping : Over : God
[CMP Records CDalbum]

Nice to receive a bit of unashamed guitar outrage every once in a while, and if one has a yen for excessively over-the-top muso hand-jobbing, what better way to indulge it than this album... Torn's credentials are enough to make you flinch several times over (ECM, David Sylvian, an LP with Mick Karn & Terry Bozzio) not to mention the fact that the CMP imprint usually guarantees hair-tearing & teeth-grinding, but here he's solo (with numerous overdubs) and on, um, fine form. The two major styles in evidence are sort of non-new age ambient and eastern-tinged freak-outs, some of which approach near epic neo-psychedelic proportions. Torn's style sometimes approximates Fripp at his furthest out and prime Zappa, though there are a few disturbing moments where he veers towards a kind of Pisspot Metheny 'Spanish Rhapsody Theme #666 (Variation)' groove. Luckily these moments are fleeting. I must confess to finding it quite entertaining and would unhesitatingly recommend it to guitar masturbators - just check out 'Bust My Ass For Thinking' - but I'm not sure what most of you guys'd make of it. Wish he'd kept his trap shut though - the vocals are uniformly unacceptable.
SJ
[CMP Records, PO Box 1129, D-5166 Kreuzau, Germany]

TRANCE
Notre-Dame de L'oubli
[Fourth Dimension 7"]

Three very different sides of Mason Jones' work are showcased on this limited (though still available, I think) single from the ever reliable Fourth Dimension stable. The title track is a solo guitar improvisation and is extremely effective, if a little predictable. Over on the B-side, 'Spirit Monologue' is a different kettle of noise altogether - a hypnotic, droning piece recorded live by Mason using vocals, drum, whistle and recorder. This works well as a contrast to the scraping and clanging of the title track. Rounding things off is a Japanese performance by the group Torture Chorus, of which Mr Jones is a part. This is heavy and relentless, dominated by a pounding rhythm and lots of shouting - and not nearly as individual as the rest of the single, but it does make for an interesting combination.

VL

[Fourth Dimension, PO Box 63, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 6YU, UK]

TRANSGLOBAL UNDERGROUND
International Times
[Nation Records CDalbum]

Hats off to TGU, they're a hard working outfit, that seem to be on endless tour, yet for me they haven't recaptured the past glory of the classic "Templehead", that put all the east-meets-west dance music firmly on the map. "International Times" comes in at a slightly new angle, incorporating a more hip hop backdrop, and a pretty laid back rap vocal from David Colleridge Hewitt. The thing that does make this a bit of a cut above the rest is that it has a very Consolidated feel to it. Less in yer face, mixed with the usual blend of Arabic vocals from Natache Atlas, which is what TGU are all about after all. Remixes by everyone and his aunty!

DM

[Nation Records, 19 All Saints Road, London W11 1HE, UK]

TRIAL OF THE BOW
Ornamentation
[Release Entertainment CDsingle]

This debut EP by Trial of the Bow is well-named: the music of this Australian duo, based on the Eastern mode, is highly ornamented, perhaps even too rich in parts. For example, the opening 'The Two Sacred Tapestries of Persia' is too self-consciously 'ethnic' for its own good; much better is 'Inverloch' which is more spacious and otherworldly, although still anchored by minimal Eastern percussion. The remaining two tracks draft somewhat in the same vein, without ever really going *anywhere*. This all makes for a directionless and fairly uninvolved listen - a definite case where less would have been so much more.

VL

[Release Entertainment, PO Box 251, Millersville, PA 17551, USA]

TUBALCAIN
Left
[Funky Mushroom Records CDalbum]

Inoffensive sub-Ministry offering. Well, that was the first track, 'Pull' anyway. The rest is rather more interesting. 'Left' comes on all Fifties' soundtrack with its acoustic riffery and mellow vocal story-telling. 'Carbon Black' is a Trent chill-out. 'Andy Warhol' is Bowie / Chris Connolly. 'God On The Tongue' is a moody electro-noise, and 'The Morning' mellows again with Pearl Jam session style. Who says there's no diversity left in music?

DD

[Funky Mushroom Records, PO Box 100270, Brooklyn, NY 11210-0270, USA]

NIK TURNER
Space Ritual
[Cleopatra Records 2CDalbum]

United with early Hawkwind members Del Dettmar (synths) and Alan Powell (drums) for the first time in two decades Nik Turner, veteran of the sonic attack, is far closer to the spirit of Hawkwind than Dave Brock's current group line-up. For this is not to be confused with releases by Hawkwind as such because Dave Brock has retained the name and continues to release material under its banner, most of which is the self indulgent throwaway crap that we have come to expect from aging 70's rockers. With Hawkwind's original "Space Ritual" regarded as a classic moment in the bands history, it would be easy to dismiss Turner's recent live recording as simply an attempt at cashing in or a concert souvenir for those who were not around the first time, extra added guest star ingredients (Genesis P. Orridge, Helios Creed and members of Pressurehed) thrown in for good measure. Be sure that it is neither, Turner has effectively turned the clock back and not only re-captured that finest hour but improved on it. Faithfully recreating several "Space Ritual" staples (including the incredible spaced out 'Sonic Attack'), and mixing them with a cover of late Hawkwind member Bob Calvert's 'Ejection' and a few cuts from his own recent solo efforts he re-worked the legend for thousands of American fans. Over this two hour double disc set, recorded live at The Great American Music Hall, San Francisco Feb '94, Nik Turner is unendingly dynamic, his sax and flute playing propelling the psychedelic sound barrage forward, his vocals and lyrics tantalisingly mustering other, science fiction and fantasy worlds. He has dragged the spirit of space-rock out of its grave and given it an injection of 90's intensity. A unique and sharply focused collision between psychedelia's past and present. As Brock and Turner continue to wrangle over the name Hawkwind from this release it is obvious who deserves the mantle, Turner is the acid king and this is a cosmic space riual.

CB

[Cleopatra Records, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]

NIK TURNER
Space Ritual 1994 Live
[Visionary VIDEO]

A visual feast of some of the tracks from the above reviewed concert discs. 'Ejection', 'D-Rider', 'Master of the Universe', 'The Awakening', 'The Right Stuff'', 'Nirbasion Annasion', 'You Shouldn't Do That', 'Thoth', and 'Silver Machine' plus 'Armour For Everyday' with vocals by Gen. See the insane, horn playing space traveller as he blows into San Francisco, leading his version of Hawkwind with astonishing urgency. Flanked by Helios Creed and members of industrial space rock icons Pressurehed, Turner looks like a character from a Mad Max film with his bug-eyed spex and his futuristic costumes and Ol' Genesis looks fab in his trippy hippy mode during his rendition of 'Armour'. The camera work and visuals are excellent and the video is suitably treated with psychedelic graphics to enhance the super stellar experience. A well recommended way to pass an hour and a superb artefact of one of rock's timeless moments.

CB

[Visionary, PO Box 30, Lytham St. Annes, FY8 1RL, UK]

v/a
TYRANNY OFF THE BEAT
[Off Beat CDalbum]

There's no spelling mistake in the title, this is a sampler from the German Off Beat label, showcasing many of their bands since their inception in 1993. Kicking off in the magnificent, dark form of HAUJOBB and their soundtrack inspired 'Haujobb State' - as good as anything Puppy have mustered in the horror stakes. The band's other track (most of the bands here feature two tracks), is more of the same, only with dancefloor beats and strangulated vocals - not exactly Puppy, but in the same territory (too good to be mere copyists). In the even harder stakes come SUICIDE COMMANDO with a most enjoyable pummeling. The sleevenotes describe the band as 'Splatter EBM' and I guess that's a pretty good description, even sounding a little like our own Vanishing Heat. PROJECT PITCHFORK of course need no introduction, and are the biggest name involved here with unreleased mixes of 'Carrion' and 'Renascence'. LAB ANIMALS is the inevitable NIN soundalike,

though they leave the pompous nature of Trent's music well alone. GENITAL A-TECH take F242's pop and mash it into a form of nasty, yet palatable Hardbeat, spewing all manner of unmatched sounds over simple sequences and drum patterns. STERIL are the hardest crossover act here with one of the most characteristic raging vocalists I've heard. Perhaps needing to meat out the electronics a little more, otherwise more than competant. Being a compilation there's bound to be a few duffers and they come in the form of ECO (Fad Gadget vocals meeting Ogre's sincerity) and the Mode synth-pop of DELAY. But, in all Off Beat prove to be a label well worthy of your attention and this 70 minute cheap-priced compilation is the place to start from.
DD
[OFF BEAT, HORSTER STRASSE 27, 45897 GELSENKIRCHEN-BUER, GERMANY]

v/a
UK TRIBAL GATHERING '95
[Universe/London Records 2CDalbum]
No, these tracks are NOT from the sets performed at the festival of the same name - not that the title or packaging tells you this. I wouldn't call it a con, but it may be a little deceitful! I mean, none of the tracks are even unreleased to my knowledge. There's not even a scrap of information about the festival itself! So, what DO you get for your money? 130 minutes of music according to the sticker, and tracks which have probably already been heard, depending on your own collectable nature. The band line-up is superb; ORBITAL, PRODIGY, LEFTFIELD, PLASTIKMAN, MOBY, BOLLAND, CHEMICAL BROS, COX, DRUM CLUB, UNDERWORLD, and that's just touching on two-thirds. If this had been incredibly cheap - I'm talking about a fiver! - then I could recommend it, but in reality do you want to pay about £16 for a sampler?
DD
[LONDON RECORDS - in your favourite music store around the globe]

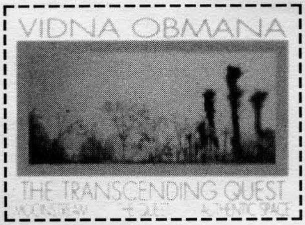
v/a
UNBECOMING
[Freedom in a Vacuum CDalbum]
Five Canadians, four Americans and a Dutch contributor make up this international compilation. Rather a loose usage of the word "international" but never mind. Standout tracks are PGR's 'Microbes' - high fequency drones in a live setting), EMPIRICAL SLEEPING CONSORT's 'We Are Sitting In A Room' and JOHN DUNCAN's acoustics-utilising 'Stress Chamber'. The only low point is Crawl/Child's sub-Skin Chamber 'industrial metal' which is pretty tiresome. The rest - DEAD MASOCHISTIC GUT(?), ALLEGORY CHAPEL LIMITED, PLECID, RANDY GRIEF, PIERRE-ANDRE ARCAND and W.A. DAVISON - are good but overshadowed by the above. On the whole, a cohesive and enjoyable collection of contemporary noise-makers with lasting potential. Presented in an attractive card wallet too.
VL
[FREEDOM IN A VACUUM, BOX 862, STATION F, TORONTO, ONTARIO, M4Y 2N7, CANADA]

UNDER THE NOISE
Future Automatic
[Cop International CDsingle]
STOP RIGHT THERE!!! SPONTANEOUS STEELY ELECTRONICS + mucho mucho clever fretwork (yes, heavy guitars are getting everywhere again) + shit heaps of hard edged dance beats dealt with a vengeance. For the opening 5 minutes 'Mind Machine'; "I am the needle in your arm, I am your fixer" snaps the synapses into life, the savage muscle of 'Manna' fleshes out the disc for 4 minutes during the interim, before the raw fuzzed up 'Future Automatic [proton mix]' cooks in warp space for 9 minutes. The 'proton mix' is courtesy of Bigod 20's Zip Campisi. This is the future of music and it's automatically yours for a few measly quid. A virtual haemorrhage of industrial talent that will be unstoppable.
CB
[COP INTERNATIONAL, MUNZENBURGSTR. 3, 61440 OBERHURSEL, GERMANY]

VAMPIRE RODENTS
Clockseed
[Re-Constriction CDalbum]
Cute cover or what? More Cyberpunk from the Recon label... Vampire Rodents seem to have called on the services of most of their stable-mates for the vocal department. Most have opted to practise their Chris Connelly impressions. Kinda works, still kinda very sad. At least "Clockseed" hasn't delved in the metal, though the Rodent could certainly do with creating a larger, hard and damn sight more oppressive sound, and stop relying on the impressive string section which manages to keep the Rodents' heads above water.
DM
[RE-CONSTRICTION, 4901-906 MORENA BLVD., SAN DIEGO, CA 92117-3432, USA]

LUC VAN ACKER
Taking Snapshots Vol. 2
[Hard Records CDalbum]
Just as Fifth Column have released "Volume 1" in the States, so Hard Records pull ahead with number two in the series. My own summation in the last issue really applies again, though the first thing you'll notice on this set is the improvement of sound quality, stemming from his use of higher calibre equipment. This is no surprise when you consider the tracks here are from 1985 and fiver years on from the original "Snapshots" concept. All, as before, are recorded in one take, and when this alone is taken into consideration you'll realise just what a master musician Van Acker was/is. The Granddaddy of EBM!
DD
[HARD RECORDS, C.F. RICHS VEJ 122, 2.TH, 2000 FREDERIKSBERG, DENMARK]

VANISHING POINT
The Shaman Calls
[Cri Du Chat Disques CDalbum]
Brazil is the centre for EBM/Industrial music. You're just as likely to sell as many records there as in Europe. So, it's hardly surprising that labels like Cri Du Chat are flourishing. Their latest release is home-grown EBM which focusses more on percussion than heavy sequences - the sequences are bassy, but minimal. A wealth of samples enhance the sparse machine-vocals of Vanishing Point's instigator Roni Barker. I can't say there's anything original going down here but "The Shaman Calls" is a hefty mover and a more than worthy new component for the unrelenting Body Music scene(s).
DD
[CRI DU CHAT DISQUES, c/o ENEAS NETO, CX. POSTAL 42396 CEP 04299-970, SAO PAOLO, SP, BRAZIL]



VIDNA OBMANA
The Transcending Quest
[Amplexus CDsingle]
Treading similar ground to the recent "Spiritual Bonding" CD, this (continuous) 20 minute suite consists of billowing clouds of dry synthetics underpinned by live and electronic percussion. Vast, dynamic atmospheres are what Vidna Obmana is good at and this is what you get for your entry fee here. I feel this CD works better than "Spiritual Bonding", evoking more convincingly the desert landscapes which are its inspiration. Complemented by quite stunning packaging (A5 colour wallet and a 3" CD) and limited to 1000 copies only, "The Transcending Quest" is most worthy of your attention.
VL
[AMPLEXUS, c/o STEFANO GENTILE, VIA FRANCESCHI 1, 31029 VITTORIO V.TO (TV), ITALY]

VOICE OF EYE AND LIFE GARDEN
THE HUNGRY VOID
VOLUME ONE FIRE

VOICE OF EYE & LIFE GARDEN
The Hungry Void
Volume One: Fire
[Cyclotron Industries/Agni Music CDalbum]

An interstate collaboration between two US experimental groups which promises to be the first in a series. "Fire" is a 70 minute sojourn into an intense elemental world of altered sound. The groups use acoustic instruments and voice only, processing these sounds beyond recognition. No track titles, just a single organic piece that respires and grows over its duration. The booklet says "this is where the sleep comes from" and that's a more than accurate description. Vapour-trails of free-floating sonics are mixed with what could be voices (but who can tell or cares, for that matter). "Fire" is a heady soundscape where you can never quite be sure what you're hearing, such is the skill employed by the collaborators in processing the original tapes. An excellent release and the first, I hope, of many. Recorded during a heatwave in the summer of 1994 and you can certainly feel it. Volume two is eagerly awaited.
VL
[Cyclotron Industries, PO Box 66291, Houston, TX 77266, USA / Agni Music, PO Box 1928, Phoenix, AZ 85001-1928, USA]

SCOTT WALKER
Tilt
[Fontana CDalbum]

Scott Walker, the man revered by artists from Marc Almond to Chris Connelly and HNAS.., even sampled by Orbital. Stepping away from the 60's pop banality he concocted fantastic lyrical daydreams and nightmares - stunningly evocative epics, visions of desire, degradation, and emotional torments encased in glorious orchestrations of armies of string or immaculately haunting Cathedral organs. It has 12 years since "Climate of Hunter" his last solo album which spawned a deeper more complex construction of his songs. With intriguing reports of influences amongst the realms of NIN, "Tilt" is born and presents possibly Walker's deepest most awesome imaginings yet. *That voice* is, of course, still there; though the passage of time now almost an octave deeper, its still bleeding with pure passion, smothering the listening with every breath. Musically, however, this time round the soundscapes encompass diverse layers of percussions and drastically shifting surroundings. From gentle strings and dark arrangements of 'Farmer In The City'; the fragile and almost irritating uncertain guitar lines of 'The Rosary'; to terrifying attacks of percussion dear Neubauten and SPK would die for on 'Cockfighter' or dreaming flutes and cascading strings share stage with the stark and lonely percussion of 'Bolivia 95'. Lyrically the prose are more detached - no longer such visually laden journeys and expanses - but here we have soft incoherence ('Cockfighter'), his signature dark broodings ('Face On Breast' & 'Bouncer See Bouncer') to broken notes and desolation ('The Rosary'). Each of the nine tracks is a barrage on ones sense in their own particular way, even the title track, a rather strange side-step from its bedmates - seemingly the token country inclusion! yet still keeping you enthralled anticipating a change in mood, a sudden abrupt... All in all Walker perfectly amalgamates his deep moody personae with exquisitely ordered layers of sounds to conjure up the demon which is "Tilt" - for sure an album to play with the lights on, for you never know what' he'll do next - assault you or seduce you, The Old Man's Back Again...
GE
[Fontana Records - in your favourite music store around the globe]

v/a
WASTED
[Volume Mag/2CDalbum]

If, like me you've previously fought a love/hate relationship with this multi-media affair, then "Wasted" will smooth away those previous contentious areas. Dispensing with the weighty, expensive glossy booklet enclosed here, which is filled with clever-dick humour (and very little else), you'll find 30 tracks of digital audio definitely worth losing yourself in. All the heavyweights of UK dance are here; ORB, ORBITAL, APHEX, LFO, SABRES, UNDERWORLD, a couple of trip-hops in the shape of the excellent TRICKY and almost-there, MASSIVE ATTACK, hardcore rap of CYPRESS HILL and CREDIT TO THE NATION, plus loads of others, including the cool, 'Low Cool' from C.V. Disk Two is an absolute blinder, but there's hardly a 'filler' in the whole package. ORBITAL's wonderful vocalised 'Belfast' makes this essential. I just wish they'd remove themselves from typical NME/M.M. journalism and stick to putting together decent compilations - and that means experimenting with more unknowns too.
DD
[Volume, 22 Brook Mews North, London W2 3BW, UK

ROZZ WILLIAMS & GITANE DEMONE
Dream Home Heartache
[Paragoric CDalbum]

Title track has Mr Williams try incredibley hard to be Roxy Music - sad attempt indeed and a bad tactic - Mr Ferry absolutely oozed style with every movement and utterance, poor imitations will not be tolerated. As for Ms Demone's contribution... she tries very hard and proves very trying. Despite a moment of salvation in 'Flowers', sad cold piano accompanies lonely, desolate lyrics (would be wonderful with a decent vocalist) the rest is pretentious crap.
GE
[Paragoric, Ketterlerstr. 4, 95652 Waldsassen, Germany]

WIRE
Behind The Curtain
[EMI Records CDalbum]

'Just when you thought you had everything', type of affair (and there's lots more to come believe me...). Entering through the punk front-door in '77 the first six-tracks here are from the same Roxy gig which previously brought you the classic '12XU'. The balance of the twenty-odd tracks left are demos recorded for "Pink Flag", "Chairs Missing" and "154", all previously unreleased, and all with that air of live urgency which made Wire so utterly indispensable and charming. Too clever for your average chart punter, but on the lips of all today's indie-pop wonders. I would still sue, you know...
DD
[EMI Records - in your favourite music store around the globe]

W.O.O.
Wootopia
[Funky Mushroom CDalbum]

Inconceivable that a group with such a name, such a pedigree (Reverb Motherfuckers, Dogbowl & Rats of Unusual Size - men have wept at less) and on such a label could produce more than one second of sound not guaranteed to cause instant listener suicide. There *are* a couple of unbearable numbers (to expect anything less from Fucky Mushroom would be counting your veal before it's crated...) but by & large it's a reasonably successful combination of (apparently improvised) 'art-rock'/skronk 'jazz' (c/o Bonnie Kane's very fine sax blart) and sort of post-no wave NY angular bleat. Kind of reminds me of No Trend in places, not that I expect that'll exactly produce palpitations amongst the TEQ multitudes... Anyway, most FM stuff ends up at around a quid in Record & Tape Exchange so look out for it...
SJ
[Funky Mushroom, PO Box 100270, Brooklyn, NY 11210-0270, USA]

WUNDERLICH
Ut
[Dyadique CDalbum]
A full 60 minute CD release for this French duo, with a rather funny photo on the front of our two heroes. Wunderlich's approach is anchored to keyboards, upfront percussion and slightly awkward-sounding voices. "Ut" contains some almost catchy songs, in a kind of pop-meets-industrial vein but is marred by overlong arrangements and obvious aimlessness. There's also an emotional coldness present here that doesn't seem intentional, and any warmth in the songs is lost in the sound of the layers of keyboard. The voices definitely take some getting used to; in places, Frederique Tardat sounds like she's just trying that little bit *too* hard. Sorry guys. Existing followers may enjoy but as a whole this seems flawed.
VL
[Dyadique, 15 Rue Des Ecoles, F-33760 Targon, France]

X MARKS THE PEDWALK
Facer
[Zoth Ommog CDsingle]
It seems X Marks... want to be a softer FLA these days. 'Facer' is a speedy little number which sounds like it has aspirations to be on "Tactical Neural Implant" but can't quite lose its pop angle to bridge any lack of extremity. 'Missing Light' sounds like some kind of awful Euro Techno and 'Ten Miles' thinks its Eighties electro-pop. 'Facer (Extremix)' rounds off this no-no, claiming savagery but only saving itself through thrashed (but short-lived) guitars. Time to reach for their back catalogue...
DD
[Zoth Ommog, Norsk-Data-Str. 3, 61352 BAD Homburg, Germany]

X-LEGGED SALLY
Eggs and Ashes
[Sub Rosa CDalbum]
Music from performances staged by Wim Vandekeybus - horrible, pompous jazz-rock blat. It might contain a few wild guitar shrieks & clarinet squawks but the choppy arrangements, 'funky' popping bass farts and general fussiness (not to mention some abominable - imitation? - accordion) make comsuming it as delightful as participating in a Scandinavian liturgy involving leaping naked from a sleigh into a pit of fermented reindeer saliva.
SJ
[Sub Rosa, PO Box 808, 1000 Brussels, Belgium]

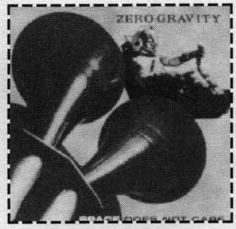
X-Legged Sally
Eggs and Ashes
Wim Vandekeybus

XYSMA
Deluxe
[Spinefarm Records CDalbum]
Hardcore with Death vocals and punk attitude from Finland! Xysma cover all the bases with off-centred solos and even added blues piano in places where you just would not be expecting such a diversion. Sort of a cross between Sex Pistols, Pitchshifter, and Television. Bizzare!
DD
[Spinefarm Records, Box 212, 00181 Helsinki, Finland]

THE YOUNG GODS
Only Heaven
[Play It Again Sam CDalbum]
The Doors are dead! Gone is the Morrison/Manzanek approach of "TV Sky" (one of THE truly great albums of this decade), and in many ways the Gods have returned to their own roots with "Only Heaven". Speed Metal, an earth of electronic grounding, and deliveries of rock/hip-hop drums thunders this album forward, a ferocity which has only been glimpsed in snatches since their debut. The Young Gods are undoubtedly one of THE original bands of these times, and whilst bands like Ministry steal their ideas and control the rock world, these Swiss guys live outside the confines of definition and continue to move electronic music into other areas.
DD
[Play It Again Sam, Rue de Veeweyde 90, 1070 Brussels, Belgium]

ZERO G
The Funky Element
[Time + Space CD]
This is one for the musicians among you. "The Funky Element" is basically a sample CD filled to the brim with a storming selection of Hip Hop grooves, so if you feel like trying your hand at some Trip Hop, Dub Industrial material you need look no further. For individual sounds there's plenty. Be it bass kicks, hi-hats, snares, sax loops, guitar licks or one of the many 'scratches to emulate that Mo Wax vibe', they're all in here. Inspiration city to say the least. Check out Time + Space 'cos the list is endless. You want it? Well they've probably got it. From the hip hop industrial wastelands of Consolidated and Swamp Terrorists to the chilled beats of Tricky and Scorn, it's all here. Invest.
RM
[Time + Space, PO Box 306, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire HP4 3EP, UK]

ZERO GRAVITY
Space Does Not Care
[Hypnotic CDalbum]
Zero Gravity is actually Len Del Rio of the Industrial band Pressurehed, but don't expect more of the same. Here Len reveals his true passion and kneels to the alter of Kraftwerk. At times "Space Does Not Care" does little more than re-hash bits of the German's work, circa their formative Capitol years. The title track does infuse Nineties style rhythms which moves the spatial tones beyond ambience. The love of Space Rock is obvious too - 'Stonehenge Revisited', c'mon, please... Perhaps an album to refer to in measured doses, otherwise it just may piss you off for its lack of personal input.
DD
[Hypnotic, 8726 S. Sepulveda, Suite D-82, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA]



ZOOM
Moods From The Exit Room
[Opcion Sonica CDalbum]
To all intents and purpose Zoom reminded me of Yello. "Moods..." plays around with jazzy breaks.., as Yello do, it uses off-kilter vocal samples.., as Yello do, and the bombastic synths and rhythms are exactly what Yello does best. Maybe Zoom have a more formally structured sound, and use poppier sequences, but it still wouldn't shake that Swiss influence for it to be recommendable as original.
DD
[Opcion Sonica, Tamaulipas # 125-23, Col. Condensa, Mexico D.F., C.P. 06140]

Of Mary's Blood

by Graham Bowers

Bower's infernal montage is a catalyst for the divination of unwanted memories. Thriving upon insecurity, his found sounds, prepared instruments and oblique edits undermine conventional structures. Miraculously relocating the recognisable in the place of the alien, the inclusion of trumpets, guitars and distant voices seems all the more perverse as he and his collaborators revel in misinformation. The skills of this sculptor in shaping abstraction are made glaringly apparent as his monster is painstakingly created. Genuinely moving as opposed to a technically interesting static position, this piece is a spiritual heir to Bryars's *Sinking Of The Titanic*. It bows, scrapes and scratches itself towards a delirious finale.

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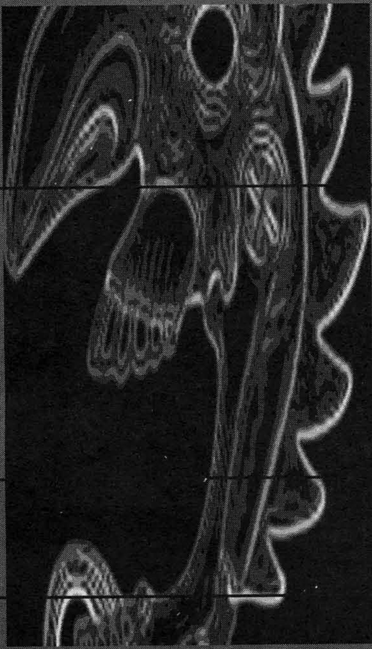

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- "THE OPTICAL GLASS" T-SHIRT (SR006)
- "HYSTERIA"/"A LION IN A DRESS" 7" (SR007)
- "KNEE DEEP IN EVIL"/"VERSUS THE CARTEL" 7" (SR008)
- "THE SEARLE BROTHERS"/"ROBOT ASSASSIN" 7" (SR009)
- Compilation 7" (SR010) *
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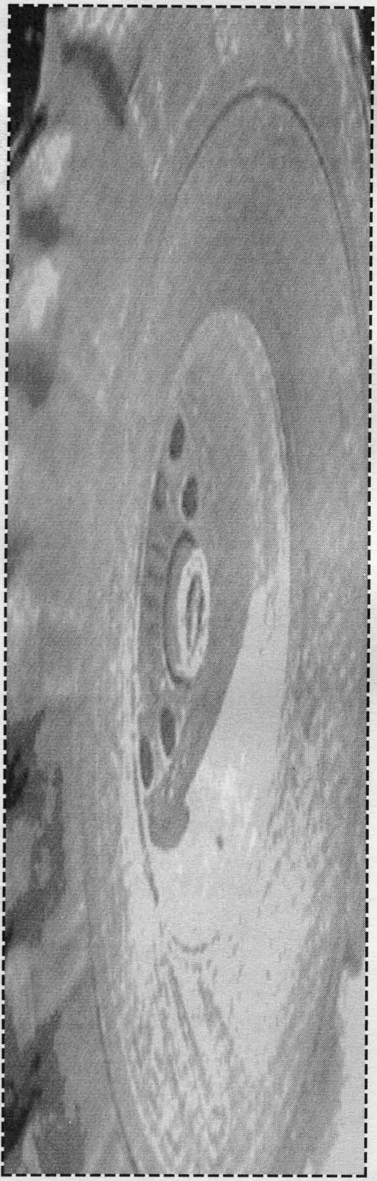
U.S. Industrial Part 2

Dissecting the American Label Scene

chase

When I was given the opportunity to write for MFTEQ, I was elated. In fact, I wrote up some great features including how to get free sex from people who hate you and 100 ways to extort money from your grandparents. Unfortunately, I was informed that because this is an electronic-oriented music zine, that my column would have to be topical. So here is something that should be as equally entertaining as hearing an old woman beg to keep from having her ribs whacked with a crowbar...



There are essentially two types of labels. The first is the Independent label which is run on limited funds, with limited distribution and has a limited amount of products to send out for promotion. The other is the Major label. These corporations have plenty of cash, widespread distribution, and enough promotional goods to saturate the press, the radio market, and the club circuit. They can also afford to fund major tours. As a result, the bands which are released by Major labels are usually the bands which set the trends and define a genre, even if these Major label-funded projects are emulating some overlooked Independent label icon.

Now that you've got an understanding about the two forces at work, it's time to examine the relationship of their products. The Independent circuit has championed "industrial"-dance, or torture-tech, or synthcore, or cybershit, or whatever, since it was created. Although Wax Trax! has churned out an abundance of these keyboard-pummeling thugs, labels like Fifth Colvmn, 21st Circuitry, C.O.P. Int'l, Cleopatra and Re-Constriction have followed their example and contaminated the alternative rock scene with loads of Wax Trax!-inspired technocore projects. It would seem the next logical step for these Independently signed bands would be to sign on with a Major label, especially since Nine Inch Nails have generated so much commercial viability for the genre.

It isn't happening.

Instead, the Major labels who want to capitalize on this "new" style have started serving up recently constructed, often watered-down, fringe-related acts, as opposed to the Independently-signed bands who have cultivated the synth-&-snarl scene over the last half decade. Do you remember hearing about Dink (Capitol), Engines of Aggression (Priority), Monster Voodoo Machine (RCA), Stabbing Westward (Columbia), Drown (Atlantic), and Marilyn Manson (Interscope) prior to 1994? I don't. The downside to starting out as a Major label band is they're treated a lot like Gargamel treats captured Smurfs— they're sodomized and then disposed of, unless they survive. It's hopefully apparent that survival is a metaphor for success. Ironically, survival in the consumer marketplace usually revolves around streetwise credibility; a thing which can only be obtained by starting out on an Independent label.

Although a lot of these Major label manufactured bands are chalk outlines of predecessing Independent bands, their spearheading of the movement is going to make it easier for bands like Chemlab, Circle of Dust, Hate Dept. and Penal Colony to get heard. However, it's the chronological credit that's being subverted.

Beyond the realm of breaking in new acts, the Major labels have also been testing the waters with veteran blood. Epic followed Interscope's lead by picking up Front 242, Sony got Foetus, Sire/Warner scooped Ministry, BiGod 20, Revolting Cocks and Armageddon Dildoes, American is serving up the long awaited Skinny Puppy, TVT has Die Warzau, KMFDM and Sister Machine Gun, Geffen is carrying around Nitzer Ebb (but I think they just dropped them), Mute is the home of Meat Beat Manifesto, and I'm sure there's a handful I missed. It's good to see a lot of this computer-driven talent finally getting some recognition in the U.S.

What does all this Major label involvement in the cyberscene mean? It means the public is being pimped the two different ends of the spectrum: on one end are the old school dance-oriented pioneers and on the other end is the flavor-of-the-month imitators. The only thing missing is the bundle of street-credible artists who have existed between the conception of Skinny Puppy and the conception of Marilyn Manson.

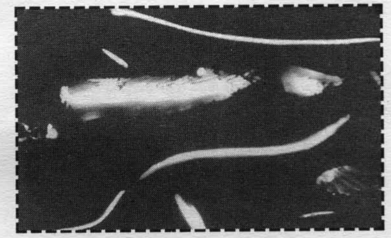
Seeing as how I have no idea about the Major/Independent label connection beyond the U.S., please mail me any insight.

> **"I don't think that the techno kids who started two years ago to listen to ambient in their chill out rooms are the people which are interested in Mille Plateaux"**

MILLE PLATEAUX

'Wave Variant'

deadhead



Achim Szepanski is one hell of a strong character. He's the force behind the German experimental label Mille Plateaux, an offshoot of the successful techno label Force Inc. For once it is true that there is more to the music of a label than the sum of its output. Artists such as Alec Empire, Oval and G.E.N., may be grabbing the attention, but it's Achim who's navigating the waters for them. In a very short space of time he's created a label which has a totally unique identity, both in its quality products and reason for being.

Achim will talk at length on the philosophical teachings of Deleuze and Guattari, where the Mille Plateaux name is taken, and their theories which he is building into the label itself. He is so aware of what he is creating there's hardly any reason for input from myself!

"We are definitely influenced by french philosophers DeleuzelGuattari and Foucault.Their works are like tools for us. Today software and synthesizers build a new sound machinery, but it only serves the reproduction of conservative music. The electronically music serves the hegemony of the molar machines, the state machine and the capital machine. Electronic music has to destroy traditional forms of music so that it can enter into a continuum of infinite variations in which the sound material molecularises, the sound potential of inanimate objects is discovered. Sounds then function as singularity that reciprocally penetrate each other without belonging to the rules of fixed relations. A circulation of molecular streams of sound, that makes it possible to join other streams. Molecularisatlon means though, the synthetisation of heterogeneous sounds through a kind of composition that holds the sound elements together without them losing their heterogenity. Deconstruction of pop and create intensity is the same thing.

"Music should be synthesis of material and energy/forces. Music should create a field where nonsonorous forces such as duration and intensity are recognised. Being a part or joining the abstract music machine is the same as becoming different or as losing identity."

The label is a breeding ground for artists with a knowledge of sound creation and manipulation. "Most of our artists are friends which we know for years. So we have for sure various discussions. But we are not a hierachical group more a 'pack' like Deleuze says. This means dispersion, small members, qualitative metamorphoses, no fixed rules or totalization. We are also interested in discussions with friends who are doing their own music machines like Scanner, Jim O'Rourke and many others."

But, doesn't the techno form restrict freedom through its repetition? "Definitely so called Techno is part of the never ending big music machines. The repeated forms of this machine move the masses. The mediums themselves multiply through electronic resonance machines, which, through their acceleration and circulation effects, place the body continuously into music. The sound potential is bound together through minutely precise methods and the sound material is subjugated to a stock taking of codes and structures. For us repetition is not the same like in pop/rave or techno. Repetition is continuous variation.The difference is what we want. We always try to be the dissidents of the techno scene.

"I don't think that the techno kids who started two years ago to listen to ambient in their chill out rooms are the people which are interested in Mille Plateaux. Some of us started to work in the electronic music scene already in the Eighties. We have been at this time part of the industrial scene and we think that people from the so called Indie scene or the art scene are much more interested in Mille Plateaux than the Techno Kids." An interesting thought, though I can only really invisage the likes of Spiritualized fans who'd be interested in say, Oval.

Mille Plateaux sprang from the successful Force Inc. and Breakbeat labels. So why another offshoot and what are the differences separating these labels? "At the end of 1993 there was a necessary reflection about the different styles of electronic music. MILLE PLATEAUX is the label to discover zones of new music, zones of continual variations as Deleuze names plateaux. RIOT BEATS is the label that has opened for Breakbeat and in some ways it continues a particular period of Force Inc itself. FORCE INC. accelerates a sound that one can already call Space Disco for the year 2000. Funkyness and minimalism should create small dance-machines. Force Inc US should work for urban desire. Mille Plateaux is now after having had a short cooperation with Blue strictly a sub-label of Force Inc."

And what of Achim's own background? "I was part of P16.D4, a very early industrial band in Germany which is still running a label called Selektion." The penny drops! Do you get involved with the recording processes at Mille Plateaux? "In the moment I'm doing only coordination and theory. We work in the moment with a very small group of artists."

With new releases due from Steel, Alec Empire, Oval, concerts at the Academy of Art in Berlin and a CDRom title which is being organised by the Academy, the profile is becoming stronger. How should us mortals view Mille Plateaux? "We can't decide this. But it's the continuous reflection about the conflicts of theory and musical practice. Not being a part of the industry."

> **"There was always the temptation to include just one big name track to catch the punters' eye..."**

JUST CREATE RECORDS

'Hit The North'

deadhead

Perhaps surprisingly after hearing only one compilation CD from a new label based in Sheffield, I wanted to know more. I was intrigued that they had the gall to put a various artists package together, containing virtually no large 'names' and expect to get away with it. Particularly in the area the music was aimed at, being Ambient Techno. After hearing the said compilation several times, I realised this was obviously a label with some knowledge of what good music actually is.

Richard Cory is the man behind Just Create Records, the man with a method to his madness. So just how does he intend to set the label apart from being just another Techno/Ambient label? "I wish I knew the whole answer. I think the answer lies in trying to do well what indie labels are traditionally good at, which is finding new talent and exposing it to the world at large." The reasoning behind "Ambient Northern Lights". He continues, "Once you start trying to compete with the majors you are dead and this applies as much to the dance market as it does to indie rock say. Quality and professionalism both in terms of music and presentation will stand out both in an underground techno context as well as the mainstream." But, surely there is a danger that your material will get bogged down in a much over-saturated market? "Of course, but I feel the answer to this is to create a profile for the label, so that people will know the label will always produce quality product but with something a bit different, i.e. Just Create. That's the philosphy anyway, although it doesn't always work out like that in practise." The presentation of "... Northern Lights" and explanatory notes was so well put together that his philosophy certainly worked on me at least!

"The label itself is about 18 months old and to some extent has been finding its feet marketwise. It wasn't set up as a techno/ambient label but appears to have become one, at least current and immediate future plans centre on this area of the market. As with many labels it was set up to release the owner's material initially, but with time has broadened to the point where my own material now only plays a supporting role. The first release was a 12" single, 'Germany' by E Zone, it lost money and in hindsight I'm not surprised. The second release was a foray into commercial house with the 12" 'Gimme Your Love' by Caravan Club featuring Deborah Miller (Caravan Club was a pseudonym for The Band of Gypsies), the record being basically one of their tunes with three other mixes by Just Create. This again lost money getting buried in the pre-Christmas release deluge. In hindsight it was a lot better record than this and deserved to do better than it did. The third release was 'Murray Walker' by Deep Level in the full 15 minute version with a hard mix by Nebula II. This has sold quite well although I must say better abroad than in the UK." Richard explains that distributors and shops over here are so deluged that they don't take the time to listen properly (or even at all) to new releases, therefore having no knowledge of what to recommend to their buyers, and that's something which TEQ has first-hand experience of.

Being a Southerner myself (for good, or bad) I wondered why the latest release, "Ambient Lights" proudly proclaimed to feature Northern artists? "I used to live there, the label started off as a North East based label, and most of the labels' contacts are still in the North East, although it is now based in Sheffield. The artists contrary to popular belief are not all from the North of England, and they are not all totally unknown. Ian Boddy has long been regarded as one of England's leading electronic musicians and master of analogue, he is based in the North East, although he plays live throughout Britain and Europe. The inclusion of the track on this album represents Ian opening up another market front and tackling for the first time the Ambient/Techno/Dance market. Trauma Club is Mike Whitford who is based in Norwich, a very accomplished musician with a long pedigree. Deep Level are Mick Clarke and James Todd, Newcastle based, they had a recent club hit with the track 'Love Versus Hate' under the name League of Sinners'. Trace Melon is the Just Create in-house production team, also recording jungle as NDM. Nebulla II, from Nottingham are relatively well known for their hard techno sound, they've been producing ambient material for some time, this being their first release. Trident is Maurice Fowler, also from Newcastle, so too Richard Henderson (2 Cabbages On a Drip). Picos de Europa are London based, good mates of mine, and very well known under their usual guise of The Band of Gypsies, being basically the Pulse 8 in-house producers."

I stand well and truly corrected! The collection flows so well, how much input did you have in its overall creation? "There is an incredible amount of work involved over a long period of time in putting together a compilation." Obviously not a case of merely contacting some bands and asking for tracks then? "As I saw it a label has two choices, it can approach 'big names' for tracks, pay out a load of money upfront and end up with an album of semi-dubious tracks, covering no new ground. The other route is to actually go out and find some new material and talent. For me there was no choice, the second being the most interesting and challenging." So, nobody in the mainstream you would have been tempted to sneak in? "There was always the temptation to include just one big name track to catch the punters' eye, but I resisted wisely or foolishly." Wisely, given the results.

"Of course, working with relatively unknowns does give you more control, it has been an interactive process with tracks going backwards and forwards until they are right. I was also involved as an executive producer with some of the artists." This must have helped the feel with runs through the disc? "You can't really choose artists to get a flow to the album, all you can do is get involved with artists whose material you find interesting, but you can pick individual tracks to some extent to fit into an overall game plan. It's really a matter of track programming at the final analysis." And, as you'll be aware once you read our Rhythm / Less column he achieved a definite home advantage, and scored more than a few goals using his approach.

Will Just Create continue this trend? "The label will concentrate in the Ambient/Techno/Jungle area but with an emphasis on intelligent techno that doesn't have to work in a club context. New talent and music that moves you are a high priority."

And, what of the current UK dance market? "Oh don't ask me this I'll end up sounding off about everything and all and sundry." Oh, go on... "Basically, too much wallpaper music, not enough brilliance and TOTALLY CORRUPT!"

"Darkly funny and disturbing"
The Los Angeles Times
Evil lives closer than you think.
THE UPSTAIRS NEIGHBOR

Son of Celluloid

sam

The independent or "underground" (for lack of a better term) film world is as comparatively stimulating and productive as its musical relative so why not include a selection of such "indie" film/video releases within the pages of MFTEQ (along with, of course, the releases from the realms of independent music video). We are not planning to isolate coverage to the obvious art for arthouse-sake type celluloid offerings here but supply an insight to the more gritty, grassroots film/videomakers who seem to get lost in the mad rush for MGM or the ICA.

How better to start a spanking new column than with the debut releases from a spanking new video label. SCREEN EDGE is an off-shoot of the established and highly versatile VISIONARY who brought us some of the most interesting and innovative independent music and film video experiences. The launch of Screen Edge arrives with the release of four very divergent high class films from the "fringe" and a truly superbly opulent taster of things to come.

First up on the spools we have "THE POPE OF UTAH", Chiam Bianco and Steven Saylor's superb fusion of blackmail, murder and neurosis - TV preacher Melvin Pressin "the voice of God" is on the verge of "superstardom", the dream that is so out of reach for ex-comic and TV censor Del who is also the victim of his wife's unhealthy and expensive obsession with Melvin; a man can only take so much - frustration erupts into madness involving a cheerleader, camcorder and a hi-tech mental breakdown. TPOU is riddled with black humour and an exquisite satirical in-sight of the TV-dominated not so distant future.

If black humour is your thirst then YAHOO! step inside the world of "ALFRED PACKER: THE MUSICAL". For the uninitiated dear Alfred was a pioneer back in the 1880's who lead a party across America but unfortunately arrived alone having "lost" his fellow travellers - his "lost" companions turning up as mutilated corpses. Packer declaring it was his companion Wilson Shannon Bell who had committed the murders and he had killed Bell in self-defence, only resorting to cannibalism as a means of survival. This jolly little musical re-investigates the legend of the only man in America to be convicted of cannibalism punctuated gaily with such vaudevillesque gems as 'Let's Build a Snowman' and 'Hang the Bastard' - director Trey Parker delivers a masterpiece of hilarious and hamish tastelessness - a kind of Little House on the Prairie meets the Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

On a more psychological level we have James Merendino's "THE UPSTAIRS NEIGHBOUR" where you are taken through a disturbing study of over-active suburban paranoia. Eric's new neighbour is weird, he makes real odd noises and relentlessly paces the floor, he taps Eric's phone and is involved in devil-worshipping, performing strange ceremonies and sacrifices, or is he? Sebastian Guierrez is brilliant as the victimised novelist trying to survive his living hell. Plagued and tormented by his Neighbour, with no support from friends or authorities Eric has to stand alone to prove his Neighbour's dark doings - thrilling and darkly humorous you are left with strong doubts whether to share that cup of Gold Blend.

Finally, the most chilling of Screen Edge's offerings is "THE FRONTLINE", a cold and depressing social drama set in Moss Side, Manchester where ex-mental patient James fights to uncover the truth behind his girlfriend's "suicide" and expose her murderer. "The Frontline" is a horrifyingly realistic observation of drug addiction, political corruption and a decaying society; the madness which James epitomises in his statement "there's more on the outside than there are on the inside".

Next out of the post bag we have ELIJAH'S MANTLE "PHILOSOPHY WITH A HAMMER" (dist. WORLD SERPENT). Mark Ellis composes the music and

EYELESS IN GAZA
Street Lamps 'n' Snow

directs this visual array of brooding images, festooned with religious icons and Christian imagery - a fascinating 20 minute exploration of sexuality and Christian doctrine.

We also have from the aforementioned VISIONARY a handful of releases amongst which is "INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION-FIRST EDITION" - 60 minutes long and contributions from various areas of the genre - archive cuts from such godfathers as THROBBING GRISTLE, in the form of 'Discipline' (1981) and CLOCK DVA's fit inducing fast cut imagery of 'The Hacker' (1988) sitting along with PSYCHIC TV's nightmarish visions in the dragging and disturbed 'Catalan' (1984). PENAL COLONY and PIGFACE bring up the rear with more up-to-date offerings, FOETUS' fast and frantic 'I'll Meet You In Poland', NEUBAUTEN's awesome noise factory 'Headcleaner', words of wisdom from WILLIAM BURROUGHS and ELECTRIC HELLFIRE CLUB's dark menacing psycho killer 'Mr 44', a superbly executed and over the top processed performance of homage to David Berkowitz. Well worth a spin.

Last but not at all least we have Visionary's blasts from the past in the form of DIVINE "SHOOT YOUR SHOT" and EYELESS IN GAZA "STREET LAMPS 'N' SNOW". The former being a live performance from the Diva of Drag at the Hacienda in 1983 - a purely profane and outrageous stageshow including classic cuts Native Love and Born to be Cheap from the Queen of raunch and glamour! In total contrast "Street Lamps 'n' Snow" is a very simple recording of one of EIG's live performances. A bare and stark stage occupied by too lonely souls who let rip an avalanche of anxiety and emotion. Gentle and warm yet sad and intense. 'Drumming the Beating Heart', 'Transience Blue', 'Two' et al lead you through EIG's ever gracious, rapturous performance.

Well, with my film fix accomplished this issue's rather diverse post bag is now empty and the video recorder begging for rest so... THAT'S ALL FOLKS

Any review items should be sent to the TEQ address for the attention of SAM.

REDEFINING "FUN" FOR THIS FABULOUS DECADE.

BELT
The Killing Verdict
(VACCD.04 • $12.00)

Belt's CD debut: a volcanic eruption of white - hot, ecstatic rage: "If you want to hear evil in a new form, check out Belt." — **METAL CURSE #6**

CRAWL/CHILD
Principles of Exclusion
(VACCD.03 • $12.00)

Crawl/Child's CD debut: "...a listening necessity for anyone seeking the gathering and the return to the rituals of movement and ecstasy."
—**THE ARTHUR**, April 4/95

V/A
To Step Outside and Keep Walking
(VACCD.02 • $12.00)

A co-release with **Swinging Axe Productions**, featuring music by: **Randy Greif** (U.S.), **Art Simon** (U.S.), **Contact With A Curve** (U.K.), and **Jocelyn Robert** (Canada).

V/A
Unbecoming
(VACCD.01 • $12.00)

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“Our subject is DEATH and the PITY of DEATH.”

AUTOPSIA

‘Europa State’

deadhead

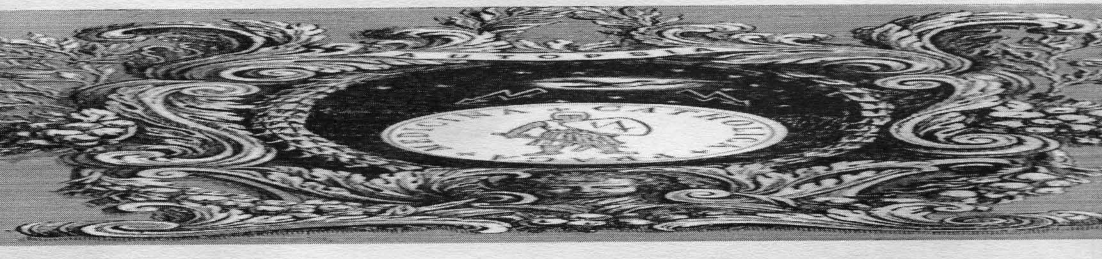
Musical grandiosity is not an entity which one encounters everyday, but anyone who’s read this magazine since its inception will have come across the odd review of an Autopsia release. Indeed, if you’re lucky enough to possess Issue 3 - and there were only 1200 of these knocking around - then you’ll have seen a statement about them from Jozef Ahmed. He proclaims they are ‘A Group for the State called Europa’, and he’s probably right.

Rade Milinkovic was the founding member of this cultural facet. I can’t and won’t call them a group, because they are not a mere musical entity. On a strictly musical level they are rooted in classical and experimental, but Autopsia is more than music. My only real comparison would be early Laibach, I guess because of their locale, but I obviously upset Rade with my naive thinking; “We hope, now in the year 1995, the difference between Autopsia and Laibach must be clear to everyone. “ OK, my assumption is purely on a surface level, not intended as a influential guide. So, who are your musical influences? “We don’t have influences. But we have metaphysical / spiritual predecessors: Casanova, Kafka, Mozart, Nietzsche, Holderlin, John Dee, Zosimos of Panoplis, Jacques de Molay...” The use of strong graphics play a large part, you have influences from art? “We are not concerned with music or painting. Our subject is DEATH and the PITY of DEATH.”

Death in music is a strange concept. Autopsia’s view of death in music goes way beyond the creation of funereal marches, so there must be a philosophical content to their work? “If philosophical ideas can serve our methods of creation then we merely use fragments of general notions and ignore the origin of their meaning. Notions already formulated are part of the evolution of culture and these form part of our work only because they are part of vocabulary of culture.” Rade confounds further, “However, within the Autopsia work, the notions take on the role of creating new relationships. By being adopted into our work, the notions achieve a new identity which forms the essence of Autopsia’s work. We use established cultural patterns as codes which, in the new work represent something new - something authentic. Our aim is not to interpret, or examine origins.” I guess he means Autopsia is its own philosophy and not a mere by-product of other cultures or influences? But, then again, I’m probably way off the mark?

I wonder if it’s been hard working from within Slovakia and providing material for the Western world to digest, but Rade puts the blocks on here too... “We are interested in spiritual and cultural geography, ‘political geography’ is irrelevant for us. Prague is not in Eastern Europe, Prague is in Central Europe! Central Europe bound to Latin writing, to German language, to great expansion of Baroque art, and which is, on a cultural level in no way “Eastern Europe”.” Fair enough. Do you have a following in your own country then? “I don’t understand the question. I’m a citizen of Czech Republic, but my country is Europa.” Yeah, right on, I’m half Scottish and living in England, wrapped up as an island called Britain, but half the time living in cloudcuckooland...

“That which is ecstatic / grandiose belongs, in essence, to art. Borders that we usually call areas of reality, art, philosophy, science, etc., disappear in fascination. Autopsia does not operate with elements of ecstasy.” I’m wrong again, Autopsia’s music is not grandiose apparently. “Fascination is not achieved by the use of calculated tricks. We do not create our works to bring ecstasy to the listener, we simply create what we ourselves want to hear and that action is a way of giving and not a way of seducing.” Accepted, but surely if one releases music to the general public one must accept others’ perception of one’s work? A vision of a state called Europa is surely a grandiose view in itself?



Autopsia’s latest output is on a compilation, “Prager Kodex” issued on Discordia, through their involvement with Medicina Catholica-Praga, an archive and information centre. Soon to be released on Hypnobeat is a CD, in memorium of Jacques de Molay, “Last Grand Master of the Temple”. Anyone at all with an interest in neo-classical music should give Autopsia a listen.

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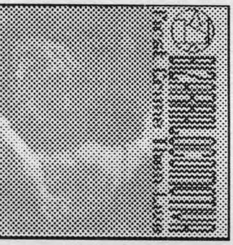

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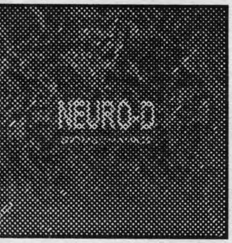

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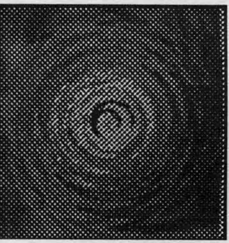

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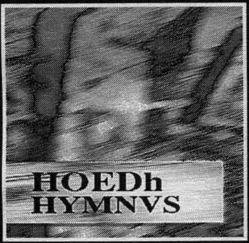

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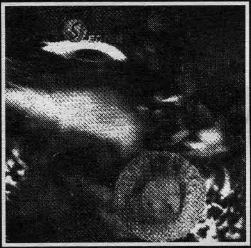

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also check specialist columns for other titles

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as supplied by Zzonked

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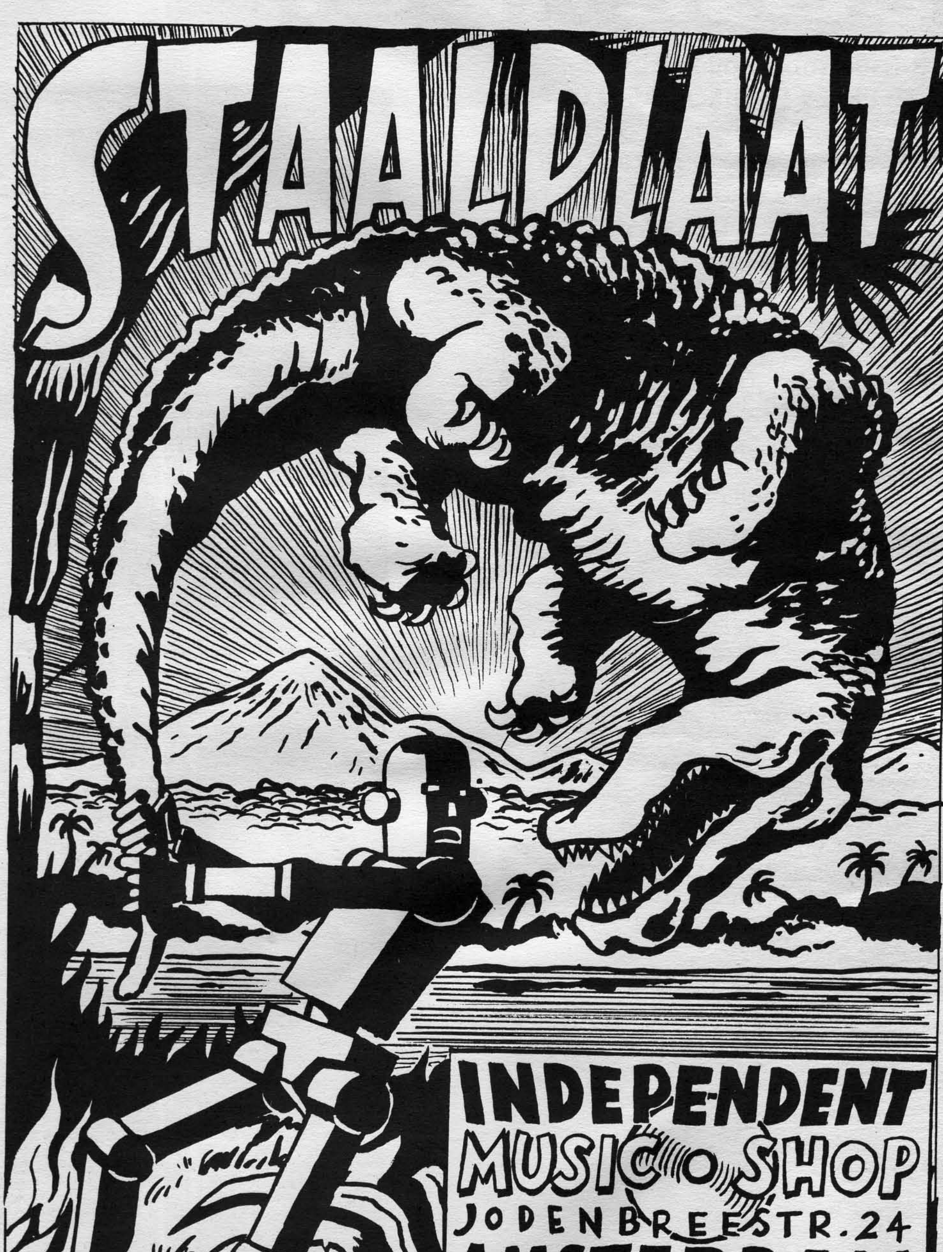
2. GLAMOROUS HOOLIGAN Viva Begativa [Delancey Mob]
3. MODEL 500 The Floor - Alex Reece mix [R&S]
4. BLACK KNIGHT Balance [Source]
5. LTJ BUKEM A Couple of Beats [Good Looking]
6. v/a Fusion Flavas [Monkey Funk]
7. A GUY CALLED GERALD Finleys Rainbow - 4Hero mix [Juice Box]
8. BOUNTY KILLAZ Do It Now - DJ Pulse remix [Creative Wax]
9. PHOTEK Seventh Samurai [Photek 5]
10. MELLOW TRONS Resolution 9 [Chill Out]

Send your charts to us!
Will be getting around the Radio Spots as well next issue - Playlists welcome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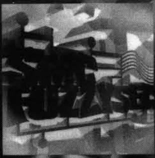

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